

Oleg Spassky

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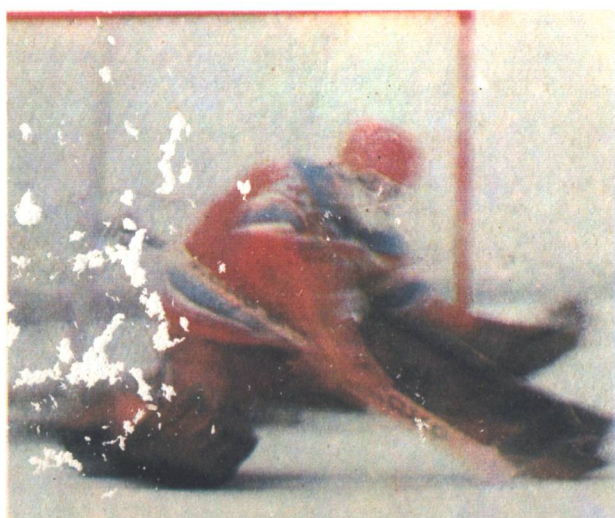


HOCKEY



Progress
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“Real Men Play Ice Hockey...”

Oleg Spassky

ICE HOCKEY



PROGRESS
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Publishers' Note

The book which you are about to read is not a comprehensive textbook on ice hockey, nor is it a magic wand which will help you master the intricacies of the game in no time. Regard it rather as an invitation to the sport, to ice hockey.

The author did not set out to describe everything about ice hockey. He thought it was more important to help readers take the first steps in this wonderful sport, to interest those who had not yet tried their strength on the ice rink.

Those who already play the game, however, will find much interesting in the book. For some, it may be instructive advice of world champions, for others—methods of training. Still others may find in it something new about famous forwards or about all the Soviet Olympic, world and European champions. This section is conducted by the Snowman, our archivist.

Remember the alphabet you studied at school? Don't you think the debate as to which letter was the more important —A or Z—was groundless and rather strange? If A is the first letter in the alphabet and Z—the last, it does not necessarily mean that one is more important than the other. All the letters are required to “build” words we need.

The ice hockey alphabet, too, has neither primary nor secondary “letters”. If we conditionally designate the goalie's technique with the letter B, the technique of a shot at the goal—C, while D denotes puck passing, you will agree that any contention that B is more important than D is absurd. There would simply be no ice hockey without one or the other, without the skilful play of the goalie, without accurate puck passing to your team mate.

Young ice hockey fans, therefore, must not be worried about the order of “letters” in the ice-hockey alphabet—here everything is important: the shot technique, the pattern of play of the winger, puck checking, the play of a defenceman in attack: all these ice hockey “letters” taken together and supplementing each other create ice hockey “reading and writing” and give birth to an exciting game.

Why Do We Like Ice Hockey?

The puck is brought into play and the game begins, a colourful and jovial spectacle which does not conclude with the end of the current game, with the final whistle. It is a spectacle always remembered by those who love ice hockey.

The Reds storm the goal of the Whites in waves. Another moment and the puck will flutter into the net. But no, seconds later a defenceman gathers the puck and sends it to one of the forwards already streaking downfield. At the red line the wing joins in the attack. He makes a dash left, heading for the centre, the opposite player follows right on his heels, but it transpires that it was only a fake attack: the puck was sent along the boards... The forward, cutting the corner, dashed for the goal at top speed, while his partner on the left skated to the goal on a parallel course. There was only one defenceman ahead of them, he, too, was outplayed. Sent by a strong hand the puck zoomed towards the net. The goalie made a lightning lunge, blocking the net in a split and parried the puck aimed at the goal's corner. The puck was retrieved by the Whites' defenceman who instantly mounted a counterattack. The stands were in uproar, passions ran high. But this pace was not the limit, was not the maximum. The puck whizzed to and fro faster and faster, the encounter got more tense. You could hardly tear your eyes away from the bluish-white ice rectangle...

...Your heart contracted and you were gripped by exaltation because you rea-

lised that there was a force of attraction in the game, you were in love with it for the rest of your life.

Why Does Your Team Win?

The Sports Palace was filled to capacity. Two leading teams were playing today. One is your favourite.

As often happens, it turned out to be a very tense game. The players in red shirts scored, then the Blues equalised and in another moment scored again. Very soon the Reds saw an opportunity and evened up the score. One team then the other took the lead. Only at the very end of the game, in the last minute, your favourites scored the winning goal!

You remembered that game for a long time and debated why had your team won...

Perhaps the main thing for the victory was the players' **skill**, their ability to bypass, to pass the puck clearly, to shoot powerfully and accurately at the goal, to help your goalie in time?

Or, perhaps, another ice hockey component—the team's **tactical preparedness**—was more important? Its ability to foresee the opponents move and in turn, offer him insoluble puzzles; ability to defend the goal and mount a swift counterattack?

Or, perhaps, it was **physical fitness** which is the basis of all sports, ice hockey including? High-speed skating, the need to keep up the pace to the last minute of the game and the ability to

tackle and body-check all demand physical fitness.

And, finally, the fourth component—the **fighting morale**.

I suppose, you recall games when a weaker team overpowered a stronger one? More often than not that is explained by the fact that players of the weaker team possessed the determination to give their all against a stronger side. That's why they begin to outplay opponent and never lose heart when the game becomes difficult.

Which of these four components is the most important? Obviously, all the four are equally important.

What Do You Seek in Ice Hockey?

This question appearing in the title and another—"What is ice hockey?"—have been put to some players.

Alfred Kuchevsky: Merited Master of Sports, one of the Soviet hockey pioneers, Olympic and world champion:

"Ice hockey is a fight. It is an opportunity to prove that you're stronger than your opponent. To prove that you're a real man... I suppose, it was the fight that I sought in ice hockey. Not a fight in the narrow sense of the word, but rather in the broader sense, a struggle with your opponent, a struggle against circumstances, with your opportunities, with yourself..."

Alexander Ragulin: Merited Master of Sports, many-times world and European champion, thrice Olympic champion:

"Ice hockey is a spectacle. Millions of youngsters play for their own pleasure. Hundreds of ice hockey masters play for the pleasure of the fans, who come to the Sports Palace not simply to learn the

score—what interests them is the spectacle on ice. You will agree that a real fan is not concerned about the number of goals scored but rather how they were scored, how the game progressed and how the teams played.

"Personally, I seek happiness in ice hockey..."

Valery Kharlamov: Merited Master of Sports, many-times world, European and twice Olympic champion:

"Our game is a club for the resourceful. A competition in game wit, in the art to unravelling ruses and in confusing the opponent. For me hockey provides a chance for self-assertion. What are we worth? The answer to this question can be also found on the ice rink..."

That is all correct. It is a struggle, a spectacle, an opportunity for the resourceful, a competition in agility and strength, an emotional and happy occasion.

"Real Men Play Ice Hockey..."

Stockholm. The Sports Palace Johanneshov. The Soviet national team was playing an extremely difficult match. The rivals attacked, shooting one puck after another at the goal. All of a sudden misfortune struck the Soviet team: the puck struck Vyacheslav Starshinov in the temple. The captain dropped to the ice. His team-mates helped him to the bench.

I don't know what TV viewers felt and what their thoughts were at that moment but those who sat in the Johanneshov stands were apprehensive: the team had lost its leader, the best forward...

Then we couldn't believe our eyes: several minutes later Starshinov again appeared on the ice. It is difficult to imag-



Ice hockey festival

ine the courage, selfless devotion to the team and the ability to overcome pain the player needed to carry on.

Oleg Belakovsky, the national team's doctor, said:

"The players' courage, and bravery have always attracted me. In the final analysis, sport makes man a real fighter. In this respect ice hockey is preeminent, it has no equal. Its players are bold, resolute and sturdy lads... I believe that hockey players are faster, stronger and harder than players in football, water polo or volleyball..."

Ice hockey can be called the sport of jet speed.

The puck streaks above the ice, players chase it, one attack follows another, now one goalie parries powerful shots, now the other. Once more the forwards lunge forward storming the rival's goal. The pace of the game mounts, every 40-50 seconds the trios change. It is hard to follow the puck, while the speed gets faster and faster and it seems there's no limit to it.

The speeds of the top players are enormous but the most incomprehensible thing in this game is the swiftness of the tactical thought of a hockey player, his ability to see instantaneously what's what in a constantly changing situation and adopt the best and most unexpected decision to outwit his rival.

Anatoly Tarasov, top hockey expert, wrote about Anatoly Firsov: "Anatoly astounds one above all by his lightning ability to think. At times I think that Firsov's play is conditioned by a string of lucky findings: he comes up with most unexpected decisions in the most tense situation, finding his bearings with lightning speed. Then the speed of execu-

tion of this or that technical move: passing or by-passing. Thirdly, his speed of skating. Three speeds, taken together and multiplied. During the game he thinks without separating the idea from execution, thinking *synchronously* with his actions and acting *synchronously* with a search for a correct decision."

This description of Firsov's play speaks volumes about the character of modern ice hockey.

When I look how adroitly and faultlessly Valery Kharlamov dribbles the puck, how skilfully he avoids colliding with defencemen, I immediately picture downhill skiers hurtling down the slope weaving among the flags, and I think that for Kharlamov agility is the main thing in the ice hockey.

Ice hockey has other merits which attract to it the hearts of millions of fans. Strength, courage and boldness—Oleg Belakovsky, who has been working with athletes for several years, emphasised these qualities of hockey players especially. Body-checking within the rules is indispensable in any match.

...I heard this word on many occasions: in Halla Tivoli in Ljubljana, Stadthalle in Vienna, Le Stade de Glace in Grenoble, Johanneshov in Stockholm, at the skating rink in Bern and Verne in Geneva. I heard these words before the world championship matches in Prague, Moscow, Munich, Düsseldorf and on the eve of the Olympic tournament in Innsbruck. And every time the coach was categorical:

"Today we play with maximum toughness. Don't spare yourselves. Only the courageous and the strong can win. But..." at this point the coach made a long and wearisome pause,—“no pen-



Hockey is a battle

alties. Everything within the rules. Respect your rival."

They went out on the ice, fearless ice hockey knights. Passions flared, daredevil lads clad in "armour" collided with one another, someone got knocked against the boards with such a force that, they heaved pitifully, the entire harmonious and strict ice hockey geometry collapsed and one could hardly follow the tactical progress of the game (it was clear that in another dressing room the coach of the opposing team also called upon his charges to be courageous). Now there was another, more intricate logic in everything that was happening on the rink. It seemed that the players no longer controlled the pace of the game. Even the ice, blue with a pearlish tint, couldn't withstand the heat of the battle and

turned bluish-white. The electrified spectators would now hush, now applaud violently, now break into indignant whistles with the referee heading for a knot of players entangled in a tussle. A minute later the most brazen bullies would forge their grudges and again spectators would admire the elegance of the players. Then again someone would be bodychecked hard and opponents once again get their backs up. This strange, almost unreal, alloy of courage and elegance agitated, lured and excited the spectators.

Ice hockey is a harsh, courageous and resolute game. All other conditions being equal, those win who hold out.

Sometimes the spectators are puzzled: isn't there too much rudeness in the game?



Hockey is a spectacle and happiness

Yes, sometimes there is, but not very often. Ruggedness and strength are not rudeness. They are the traits of the game, malienable and necessary for all-round physical fitness of a hockey master.

A popular Soviet song goes: "A coward does not play ice hockey."

Then why not try to intimidate an opponent? What if he buckles down and begins to get nervous?

And they do try...

But it turns out that the opponent doesn't buckle down.

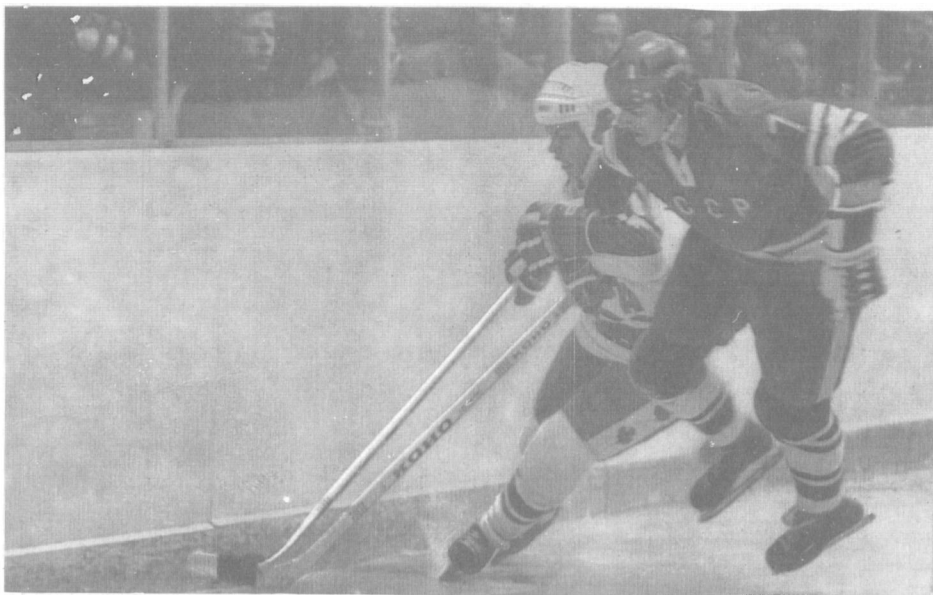
That's when it all begins. Someone smacks someone against the boards, the partner of the "offended" tries to elbow the "offender" away, other players rush to help and in this tussle referees have a hard time of it pulling the bullies apart and then, raising two fingers, invite

the penalised players to the penalty bench.

The rules of the game are strict enough and have a sobering effect on even the most hot-headed. That's why the coach in his last words before the match warns: "Toughness within the rules."

A strict adherence to the rules of the game is yet another guarantee against rudeness in ice hockey. Punishment is inevitable: the referee will stop the game and penalise the culprit.

The craving for a fight, for a victory excites, inspires, agitates and raises the passions of even the most cold-headed. If not for this excitement, if not for the encounter of courage, will and self-pride, don't you think ice hockey would have been a little bit insipid? Would not it have surely lost its emotional appeal?



... and a competition in agility and strength

The tussle on the ice is not the settling of scores with each other. Rivals—but not enemies. This is what young ice hockey players should remember. Those who spoil for a fight, or unjust, dishonest fellows better not take a stick in their hands. They must not disgrace the game.

Respect towards one's rival does not allow a player to behave dishonestly, to attack, for instance, a player who falls down. In the same way, a real boxer will never fight against a person who does not know how to box.

The game of ice hockey is a harsh one, but at the same time it is a game of the knights. Ice hockey is a school, a school of education, both physical and moral.

...A lad grew up without his father and it was hard for his mother to look after two madcaps and a daughter.

After finishing seventh grade, the lad

went to work—he had to help his mother. He got a job as a metal worker's apprentice in a small shop, with a way of life and behaviour of his own. He immediately felt himself grown-up. How does a youngster imagine his entry into the world of adults? Firstly, in his freedom from school restrictions and, secondly, in copying the world of adults. If they all smoked in the shop and did not stand on ceremony in using bad words, it was not surprising that the young metal worker, too, tried not to lag behind the adults.

What was his future? Most probably, growing older and realising the emptiness and uselessness of his inclinations, he would have cast aside the "fun" and continued with his studies. Most probably... But there was a possibility of another "choice"—of consolidating the habits which attracted him in his early years.

He was lucky. He met ice hockey. He saw this huge and wonderful world, which he just couldn't resist.

He got carried away with ice hockey. It virtually took him in its grip. He began to live differently and realised that he could not go on without studies. He realised how little he knew and felt hurt—he had been robbing himself.

For that boy ice hockey meant a new life style, new friends and new dreams. For him ice hockey became a school, a media, a very existence. Today yesterday's lad is an army officer, a Communist with many decorations, and a coach with a specialised education.

He is Anatoly Firsov.

This outstanding player, surely, better than most of others, realises that ice hockey not only involves fantastic speed, accurate slaps at the goal and passes precise to a millimetre, but also the moulding of a youngster's personality.

Ice hockey and sport in general, mould and hone the character, help a young man enter adult life strong and courageous. There is also a feed-back in this sport however—most significant success comes to kind-hearted and good people, to those who honestly and faithfully serve the interest of their team, their teammates.

Chairman of the Golden Puck Club (a most popular competition of Soviet boys) and famous coach, Anatoly Tarasov is not only a Merited Master of Sports and a Merited Coach of the USSR but is also Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences. Pedagogical! Tarasov thinks that the main task of every coach is to bring up an excellent athlete and, above all, to educate young men, youngsters and children. Here is, for instance, what he says about

collectivism in sport: "Collectivism in ice hockey is, of course, not only passing the puck to your partner and not only showing your concern for your team-mate in the heat of battle; collectivism involves also the relationship between the players outside the hockey rink. It is the responsibility of each player to the collective, to the team, to studies at school or at an institute, for one's success in work and in doing one's stint in the army, for one's deeds, and behaviour."

To help your partner always, in all cases, in all situations, even when the going is tough for yourself—this is a law for players of the Soviet national squad. A kind sympathy and sincere interest in a comrade's well-being—that's how players of our national team understand friendship.

Another tradition of our national team, too, convincingly displays the friendship of the country's best hockey players, a friendship which should be taken as an example for all the participants in children's competitions. There are no Spartak, Dynamo, Central Army Club, Torpedo, Lokomotiv or Khimik players—only the players of one team—the Soviet national team.

Several years ago Vladimir Yurzinov, then one of the Dynamo players, fell ill. A new trio had to be formed in a hurry. It turned out the Army men Leonid Volkov and Anatoly Firsov could play to the best advantage in the trio headed by Victor Yakushev, a Lokomotiv player. Another year passed and Army men Alexander Almetov and Veniamin Alexandrov took Yakushev into their trio. Anatoly Ionov from the Central Army Club made his debut in Tampere—he was entrusted to play in the Spartak trio. Later on Anatoly



Lightning tactical thought

recalled that it was Spartak player Vyacheslav Starshinov who helped most of all. Dynamo player Vitaly Davydov and Army man Victor Kuzkin played together for nine years and were the stable, tried and tested pair of defencemen in the Soviet national team.

Alexander Maltsev, a 19-year-old Dynamo player made his debut in the 1969 World Championship in Stockholm and two years later in Switzerland played in the Army trio with Anatoly Firsov and Vladimir Vikulov. The experienced players did everything to help the young player find his bearings.

Ice hockey teaches the boys to develop other wonderful qualities—optimism and an indestructible faith in one's own strength, the ability to hold out in bad turns of events and find strength in oneself to win in a losing game.

I recall how at Ljubljana the Soviet team was two pucks behind in a game with Swedish players. The Soviet squad found, however, latent reserves and equalised—2-2. As for the Swedes... They didn't want to yield a point so easily and scored once more, taking the lead again. The Soviet team then came at the Swedish goal in waves and, finally, Anatoly Firsov equalised the score. A draw.

There is not an idle moment in the ice hockey. Stoppages, stagnation, marking time are dangerous here. One who rests content that he is successful today, will never score victory tomorrow. Victory comes to those who never tire of searching, thinking, trying and experimenting. To those who know no rest. To those who seek no rest.



Ice hockey is a club of the resourceful

Who Has More Imagination?

In ice hockey that team wins which plays a more clever game and displays more imagination. An ice hockey match is like a battle. Everything is important here—reconnaissance, surprise attack and, perhaps the main thing, a good tactical plan.

Let's take a closer look at the way Alexander Maltsev plays. Usually we notice him at the spearhead of the attack, at the opponent's goal where the puck is at the moment. But the main merit of this brilliant Dynamo forward is his perfect tactical skill, his cunning, his ability to camouflage, to "hide" on the rink. His mates lunge into the attack, but Maltsev hangs behind in the second echelon, in the background. The defencemen, keeping a watchful eye on the developing attack of

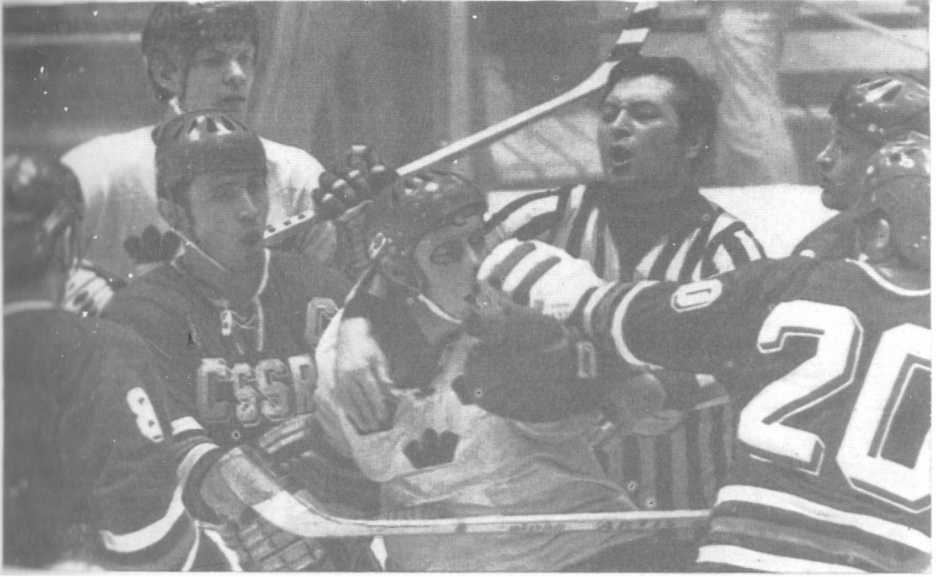
their rivals, forget about him. And that's when Maltsev suddenly appears from the depth of the field, swift and purposeful... The rivals are caught unawares.

Ice hockey means quick mind and an art to outwit an opponent. In modern ice hockey the level of a tactical preparedness of a team and of each individual player has an ever greater role. In this game players must be able to think. If the Soviet top players defeat their main opponents, it means that they play tactically a more inventive and diversified game.

Here is a situation familiar to all. Five Spartak players appear on the ice followed by five players of the Central Army Club. Immediately Spartak's coach replaces all his five players. The Army coach follows suite and replaces his men. And once more, the Spartak players leave the ice...



“Real men play hockey...”



Hockey players are courageous, resolute and hefty boys

What happens? Why do the coaches bounce the teams without giving them a chance to play even for a second?

The explanation is quite simple.

The coaches try to outwit each other, to plan the game so that a definite trio plays against the rivals, which in the coach's opinion, can fulfil the task—outplay their opponents.

The Central Army Club team, for instance, time and again tried to field Mishakov's trio against the leading Spartak Starshinov's trio. The Army coaches thought in this way to neutralise Spartak's back force. They were not put off by the fact that, busy with the most attentive blocking of the rivals, Mishakov and his team-mates would hardly attain success themselves. The Army coaches banked mainly on Almetov's and Firsov's trio.

But Spartak coaches, well aware of the Army ruse, were not content with such a game pattern. As soon as Mishakov's trio appeared on the ice, they withdrew Starshinov's trio. The Spartak coach sent his leaders into the fighting only when the Army team's strongest trios of Almetov and Firsov were on the ice. Even in the later years Alexander Yakushev and his partners from Spartak tried to get off the ice as soon as Vladimir Petrov's trio from the Central Army Sports Club appeared on the rink.

That is why players often change in the course of the match, trios mix and the attackers play for a time in different trios. Knowing, for instance, the opponents expected Kharlamov in the company of Boris Mikhailov and Vladimir Petrov, the coach Anatoly Tarasov sent Kharlamov out with other partners.

That is why it is contended that ice hockey is a contest in speed, strength and courage as well as in an ability to think and create on the ice.

Ice Hockey From the Stands

A well-known Soviet composer **Alexandra Pakhmutova** once said: "Ice hockey, like music, is many-sided. Loktev, Almetov, Alexandrov are the classics in it. Mayorov and Starshinov are jazz rhythms, of course. And look at Tarasov. He is an inborn conductor! One of my songs goes: 'A coward doesn't play ice hockey!' What about those who have, to put it mildly, a weaker character? I'm sure that to stand up to the tension of training sessions is to become a strong-willed person. If figure skating is an ice symphony then ice hockey is a gala performance."

"A gala performance"—probably many thousands of ice hockey fans share this thought of Alexandra Pakhmutova. Surely, it is a proper name. The rhythm of an encounter, excitement, the enthusiasm of the "performers" who play today with a special inspiration and the involvement of the spectators in everything happening on the "stage"—all this affects not only the audience but also the players. That's why the coach of an ice hockey team does not tire of reminding his charges not only about the points (the players never forget about them), but also that a good player has no right to forget that people came to the match to enjoy his artistic play.

Boris Volynov, Cosmonaut, Hero of the Soviet Union, addressing the ice hockey players who defend the colours of the national team wrote: "You have always demonstrated beautiful, striking ice hockey.

"Its beauty is in refined manoeuvres, in adroit feints, in lightning combinations, as well as in the inner qualities which you display in the most important matches."

Tigran Petrosyan, the famous chess grandmaster and world ex-champion, has always been attracted in ice hockey by the players' art to quickly find their bearings on ice and to find optimal decisions.

"Ice hockey is not simply super speed, it is the body-checking at super speed. It consists of a multitude of episodes, each of which can have its effect on the outcome of the match. This episode lasts only a split second but the player must make such a decision. We, chess players, meet practically the same situation during blitz tournaments. It has always been said and the opinion is still voiced that blitz tournaments are harmful, that the players do not think deeply and solidly. But I think that such tournaments are useful. To find a correct decision quickly in a complicated situation is an art necessary in hockey as well as in chess."

"It was wonderful to watch your game, you played fantastically well..." This was a line taken from the letter of a schoolgirl who wrote to our team when it played in the 1971 World Ice Hockey Championship at Berne and Geneva (Switzerland), one of the many letters addressed to the Soviet national squad.

Other letters:

"On Monday evening you played and earned the congratulations and recognition of the whole world."

"Thank you very much for your magnificent demonstration of the game."

A little more than a year later an event occurred in the ice hockey world which newspapers called "historical". The Soviet national team went to Canada, the



Ice hockey is a tough game

birthplace of the ice hockey. The Soviet players met the Canadians on more than one occasion and thrashed them, including matches on their own ground, but those were amateur teams. This time Soviet players had to play against the famous professionals—ice hockey stars.

On the night of September 2, 1972, the Soviet squad convincingly beat Canada's team 7-3 at the Forum Stadium.

The Globe and Mail wrote that it was the encounter of Canadian professionals with Soviet amateurs, who dominated international hockey, which gave everybody a jolt... Russians toppled the myth about the superiority of the Canadian ice hockey.

Mr. L. Percival, one of the most prominent Canadian experts, wrote at the time

that the past series of matches showed how to play ice hockey which the fans liked, regardless of whether the Canadian team won or lost.

Ever since the matches of the Soviet players with the North American top-notch masters have become a regular feature of the sporting winter, but no matter how heated this rivalry at times was, the culmination point of which became the Challenge Cup in January 1979, strengthening friendship among the peoples of our countries has always remained its highlight.

That is why it is right to say that ice hockey not only involves points scored or lost, but also a fight for the sympathies of those who spend their free time in the Sports Stadiums or at TV screens.





Ice hockey is a tough game but at the same time chivalrous

* * *

You will agree that it is extremely difficult, probably short of impossible, to identify completely the role, essence and the significance of ice hockey. It is many-sided and inexhaustible. Every tussle is the same and at the same time so unlike the one we saw yesterday. Herein lies its charm and a mysterious attraction.

If we recall everything we know about this game, we will get not one but several answers to the question "what is ice hockey?"

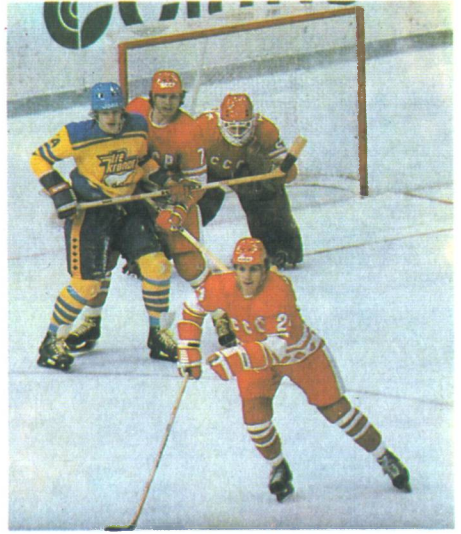
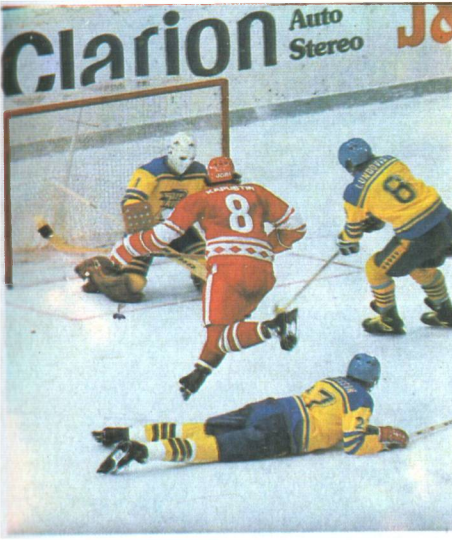
Ice hockey is the display of a man's best qualities: kindness and courage, fidelity to one's comrades and moral stamina.

Ice hockey is the fastest and most temperamental game.

Ice hockey is leisure and a spectacle for millions. It is the great force which captures one's mind. It is the battleground on which coaches vie in the art of finding the best plan of "battle." It is a means of strengthening one's health.

Ice hockey rules the interests and fads of a huge army of youngsters, an arena of competition in strength and agility, courage and persistence, skill and quick wits....





Never a dull moment in ice hockey

Golden Puck

Pages of History

More than 15 years ago the editorial board of the newspaper *Pionerskaya Pravda* together with the Komsomol Central Committee and the USSR Football Federation began to conduct national competitions of the young football players from street, courtyard and school teams for the Leather Ball Prize.

The idea caught on and soon heated football encounters raged up and down the country. Teams were formed practically in every courtyard and every street and millions of youngsters developed their mastery in exciting matches with their counterparts.

But winter came and the teams broke up until spring: it was rather inconvenient, almost impossible, to play football on the snow.

On December 8, 1964, the words Golden Puck appeared in red letters on the front page of the *Pionerskaya Pravda*. Depicted on the page was a dashing ice hockey player in a yellow shirt, yellow helmet and green socks.

The newspaper announced the opening of a new ice hockey competition for young hockey players—the Golden Puck Club. Football was passing the baton to ice hockey.

Anatoly Tarasov became chairman of the club's council and Andrei Starovoi-tov, referee of international category, Boris Mayorov, Victor Kuzkin, Alexander Ragulin, Konstantin Loktev, Vladimir Yurzinov, Merited Masters of Sports, world, European and Olympic champions—members of the main HO. Later

on Anatoly Firsov, Vyacheslav Starshinov and other ice hockey aces also joined the headquarters of the Golden Puck.

The *Pionerskaya Pravda* called upon youngsters to form ice hockey teams, make ice rinks in courtyards, in every village and to hold matches. The newspaper advised about the holding of training classes under the supervision of experienced coaches, PT teachers, experienced athletes or former pupils of sports schools...

The Golden Puck Club's HQ decreed that the best players, coaches and referees give advise to the youngsters, tell them about their training methods, about meetings with foreign teams and about first steps in the sport. It was decided that young hockey players would begin team competitions in January and that in March the strongest of them would vie for the first place on the ice at the Sokolniki Indoor Arena (Moscow) to determine the first ice hockey champion among children's teams.

The *Pionerskaya Pravda* reported that the best 30 children's teams would be awarded sticks with autographs of the players of the Soviet national team and other memorable gifts. The coaches of these teams and the organisers of local competitions would be awarded with the diplomas of the Komsomol Central Committee and the *Pionerskaya Pravda*.

"Start now, friends! Golden Puck is calling!"—the newspaper ended its appeal to its readers.



V. Starshinov, Soviet ice hockey grandmaster, presents awards to young hockey players

The First Champions

Thus, the puck was tossed into play, it darted across thousands of hockey pitches and an army of young ice hockey players began an exciting tussle for the right to be named the best.

This contest turned out to be a huge one. The Golden Puck Club's HQ calculated that in the winter of 1964-1965 two million school-children vied for the right to compete in the finals in Moscow.

During the spring school vacations decisive battles flared up on the ice of the Sokolniki Indoor Arena. The name of the country's first champion in ice hockey among courtyard teams became known a

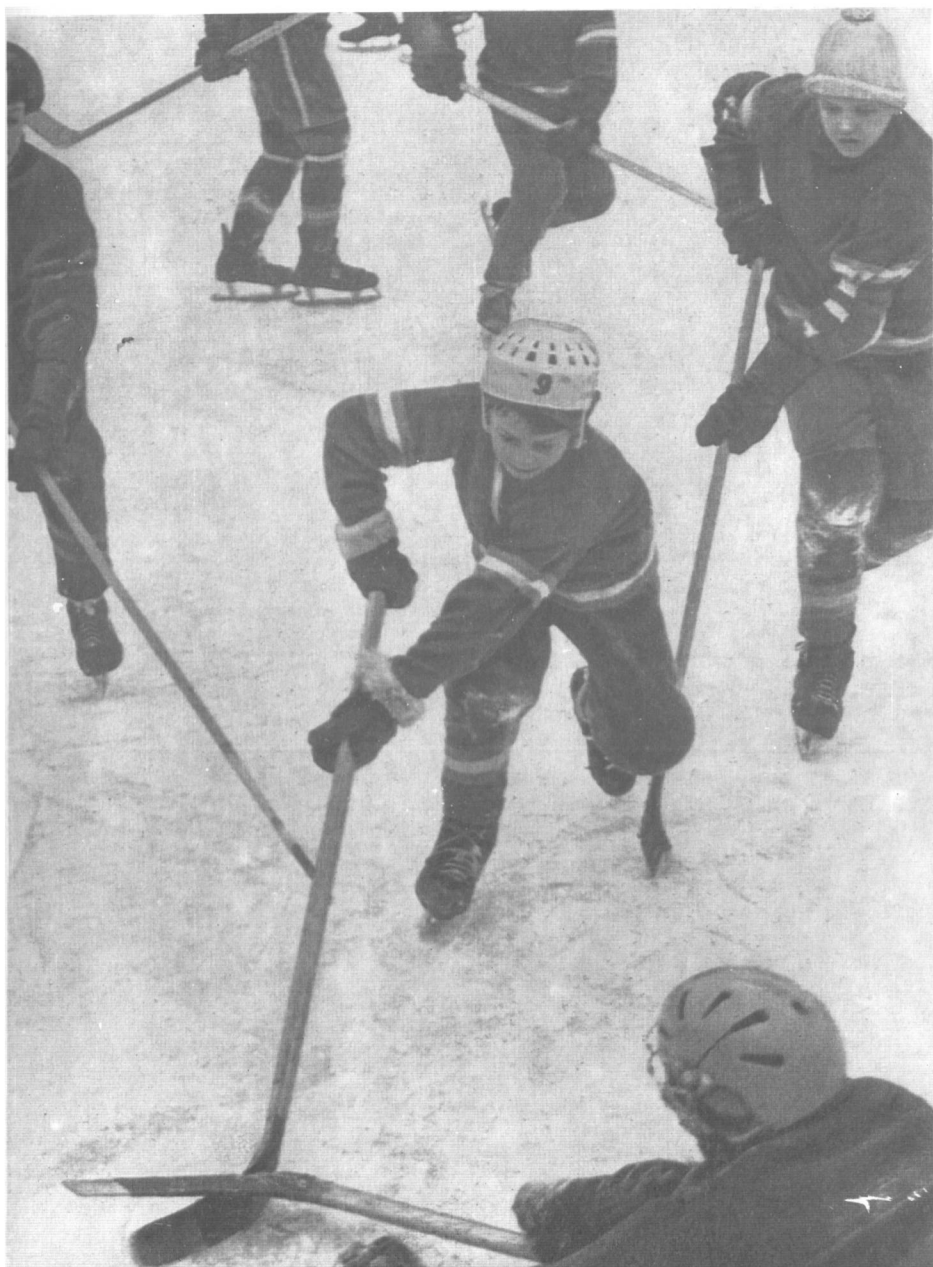
few days later. Moscow's team Shaiba (puck) won gold medals.

The young players of the Angara team, who came to the capital from the Siberian city of Angarsk, won silver and the boys from School No. 93 in the city of Sverdlovsk captured the bronze.

A year later 16 of the best children's ice hockey teams once again vied for top places in Moscow's Sokolniki Park. This time the gold medal was won by the Burevestnik team from the town of Dzerzhinsk in the Gorky Region.

More than three million young hockey players took part in the next championship of the courtyard, street and school teams. This time 22 instead of the







16 teams made the finals which were held in two cities: Moscow and Voskresensk.

In order to qualify to play either in Moscow or Voskresensk, the young regional or territorial champions had to compete in the knock out competitions with the champions from a neighbouring region.

The country's third champion among children's teams became the Signal team from the city of Novosibirsk, which in a decisive match beat the Raketa team from the town of Gus Khrustalny. Bronze this time went to the two teams—Sokol from Moscow, which won third place, and Snezhinka from Voskresensk—which was fourth.

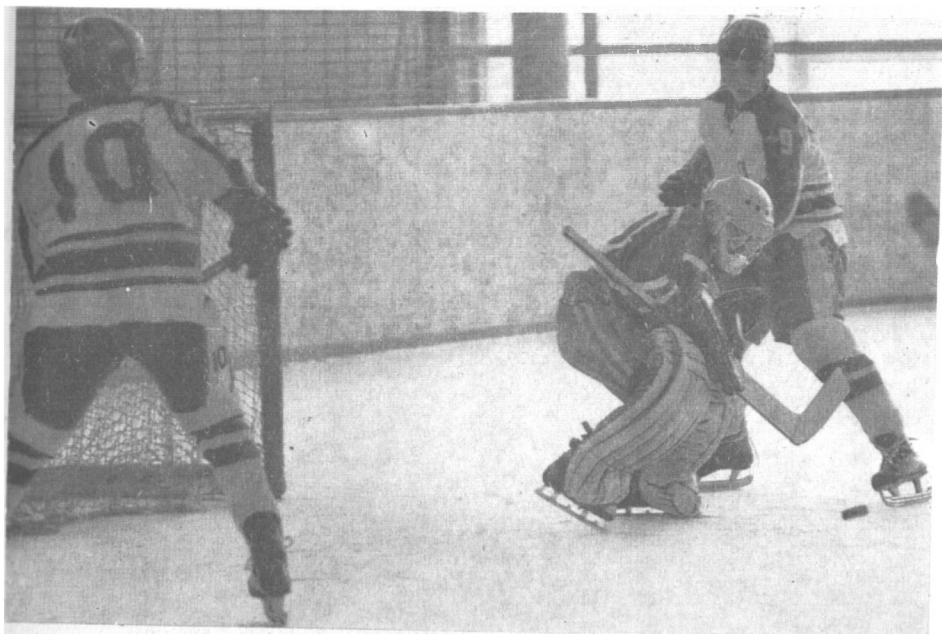
In March 1968, young spectators who packed the spacious stands of the Sports Palace in Voskresensk, applauded the

new champion—the Meteor team from the city of Chelyabinsk.

Once again the best and close-knit teams fought for prizes and medals.

The final match which pitted Meteor against the Voskresensk Snezhinka was exceptionally tense. The three periods showed no winner, the score was 2-2. Penalty shots were declared (five at each goal) and ... again the score was equal—5-5. Only the second series of penalty shots brought victory to the boys from Chelyabinsk.

Silver went to Snezhinka and bronze—to Neptune from the town of Severodvinsk (Arkhangelsk Region) and to Voskhod from the town of Inta (Komi Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic). Incidentally, Victor Zhlukto, Voskhod's player, was subsequently included in the national junior team which took part in



the 1973 European Championship, where he was named the best forward. Today Zhluktoy plays for the national team. He is an Olympic and twice world champion.

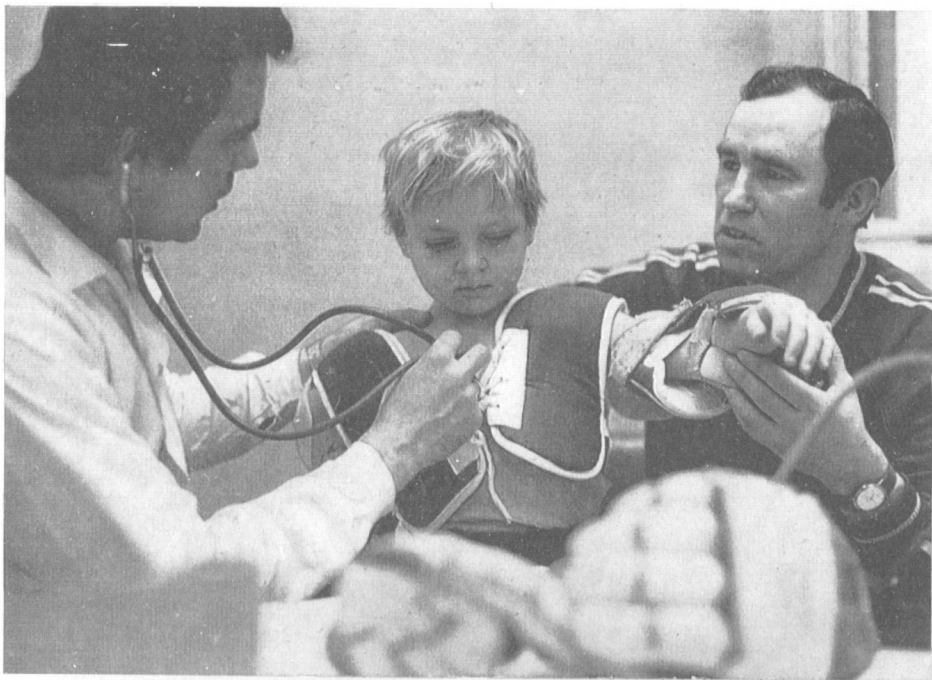
Here is what he has to say:

"In 1968 I played for Voskhod (Inta) in the finals for the Golden Puck Prize in Voskresensk. At that time I didn't even think about Big-Time hockey. My great wish was to study at the Moscow Aeronautical Institute. After finishing school in 1970, I came to Moscow and entered the institute. Since the ice hockey was very popular at the institute, I, naturally, began playing in the student team which took part in Moscow's championship. Once after one of the matches A. Vinogradov, coach of the Central Army Club youth team, came up to me and invited to play for the famous Army Club. I was happy to accept this invitation

all the more since Vladimir Petrov, Army centre forward, is my ideal in ice hockey."

The 1969-1970 hockey season, as all the subsequent ones, had several stages. First stage — October-December — the preparatory stage: the setting up of the Golden Puck Club councils, forming ice hockey rinks, holding training sessions and friendly matches, seminars for preparing team captains, referees, etc. Second stage—January-February—school, courtyard, street, settlement, district and town competitions. Third stage—February-March—regional, territorial and republican competitions. Fourth stage—the final tournament of the country's best teams.

In 1970, zone knock out competitions were held. The Torpedo team from the town of Kirovo-Chepetsk won gold,



Soyuz-5 from Prokopjevsk—silver, Snezhinka from Voskresensk—bronze and Torpedo from Moscow was fourth.

Beginning with the next season boys of the two age groups began to vie for Golden Puck Club prizes. Two finals were staged: the 12 strongest teams in each age group went to Barnaul (senior) and to Novokuznetsk (junior).

Thus, the Golden Puck now has two champions: two Fakel teams won gold. The Moscow Fakel—among the juniors and the Fakel from the Sverdlovsk Region—among the seniors.

Orlyonok from the city of Barnaul captured silver in the senior group, Varyag from Zlatoust—bronze and Kometa from the city of Kovrov was fourth.

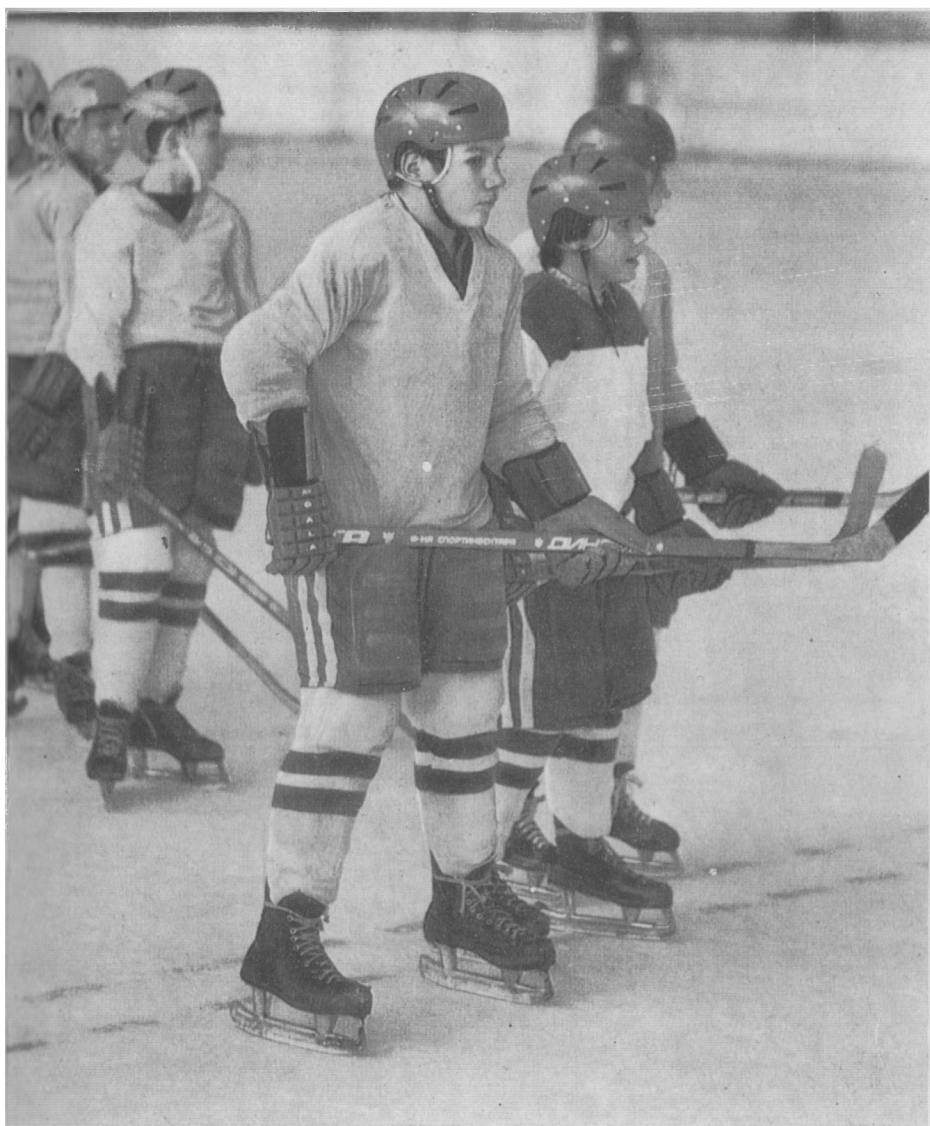
The junior players of the Globus team

from the city of Novokuznetsk won silver medals, the Leningrad Smena—bronze and the boys of the Raketa team from Ivanovo won fourth place.

In 1972, once again there were two finals. Again three million boys competed in the two age groups: junior (11-13) and senior (14-15). The best junior teams came for the finals to the city of Pervouralsk while the seniors competed in Izhevsk.

The famous champions Vitaly Davydov, Vyacheslav Starshinov and Anatoly Firsov went to Izhevsk and Pervouralsk to attend the tournaments.

In Pervouralsk, where the juniors competed, all the youngsters backed their local team with the attractive name Alye Parusa. The boys played well but



managed to capture only fourth place because the other three teams played better. Vostok-3 from Gorky won gold, Snezhinka from Voskresensk, just as four years earlier, bagged silver medals and

the Leningrad Yunost—bronze.

The Fakel team from Moscow School No. 882 won gold in the tournament of the 14-15-year-old players. A year before they were winners in the junior group.

Now older they managed to win once again national tournament among the seniors. The second place went to Meteor from Prokopjevsk and third—Yunost from the town of Glazov.

In 1973, the places were distributed as follows: in the junior age group—Snezhinka (Voskresensk), Rassvet (Novokuznetsk), Ogonyok (Cherepovets); in the senior group—Smena (Leningrad), Vympel (Kirovo-Chepetsk), Snezhinka (Ust-Kamenogorsk).

The traditional tenth Golden Puck tournament in the 1974-1975 season saw some novelties. Beginning with that season it was held not in two age groups but in three. 11-12-year-olds competed in the city of Kazan with the Moscow Kristal coming out champions by winning in the finals from the Kazan Chaika squad. 13-14-year-olds competed in the city of Ufa, where two Snezhinkas met in the finals—one from Voskresensk and the other from Ryazan, the team that won. Senior 15-16-year-olds played in the city of Tomsk where Meteor from the city of Prokopjevsk in the finals beat the Leningrad Yunost team.

Snezhinka from Voskresensk, Ogonyok from the city of Kirovo-Chepetsk and Rassvet from Novokuznetsk became champions in their age groups in the spring of 1976.

Note, it were not the teams from the capital which became champions: it were Spartakovets from Ufa, Sibir from Novosibirsk and Khimik from a small Estonian

town of Kohtla-Järve which won tournaments in 1978.

In 1976, the finals of the Golden Puck tournament were held, as usual, during the spring school vacation at the close of March, while a month and a half before three young hockey players—Victor Zhlukto, Sergei Babinov and Sergei Kapustin—became, for the first time, champions of the 12th Olympic Games in Innsbruck. They were former participants in Golden Puck tournaments, three players whose talent was first seen in the popular competition of Soviet boys.

That is why the leading coaches and masters follow children's tournaments with such an attention. For instance, coaches Anatoly Tarasov, Vitaly Davydov, Igor Romishevsky, Alexander Ragulin came to watch Golden Puck finals. Alexander Maltsev also was their guest. They all applauded the new champions—Orbita from Moscow, which has left behind Olymp from Leningrad and Zvezdochka from Saratov in the competitions of the 10-12-year-olds, Ogonyok from Voskresensk, which overpowered the sports club from Barnaul named after Firsov, and Snezhinka from Ryazan in the middle age group (12-14-year-olds), the players of Krylya Sovetov from Moscow, a winner among the 15-16-year-olds. There's no doubt that in another three-four years new Golden Puck champions, who in the winter of 1979 fought for the prizes of the most popular children's tournament, will be in the line-up of the national team.

Ice Hockey Player's Friends

Ice hockey means ice, skates and sticks. It is very important for boys to be on friendly terms with these main hockey player's companions. They should know how to prepare them for training sessions and competitions and be able to look after them properly.

Ice hockey rules, however, envisage tackling and, therefore, falls on the ice. Knockings against the boards and hard and painful collisions are quite possible. A powerfully sent puck can hit a player painfully. Ice hockey is a sport of the courageous. An ice hockey player must be brave, resolute and ready to overcome pain. To minimise bumps and bruises, players necessarily use protective equipment: pads, special gloves, shoulder and shin guards, etc. Helmets and goalie's masks are also recommended.

Skates and Boots

"Ice hockey is a team game in skates on ice,"—this is a brief definition.

Youngsters who chase the puck around on snow or asphalt, shooting at a goal marked by two boxes or bricks or two sticks stuck into snow, probably won't agree with this definition. The boys are delighted. After scoring they raise their sticks like real players in a decisive world championship match.

Nevertheless, this is not real ice hockey, which is played on ice and in skates.

That is why it can be said that ice hockey begins with skates.

Skates with boots are a first thing for an ice hockey player, plus stick and puck. There is no ice hockey without a stick.

Not all the skates, however, are suitable for the game. It is prohibited, for instance, to use skates for speed or figure skating. Ice hockey requires special skates. The front and rear parts of the blades have to be dull and rounded for making sharp turns and skating backward much easier. Secondly, they are less dangerous in collisions and falls.

In accordance with the rules, a polyethylene or rubber cap has to be fitted over the rear tip of the blade to protect against injuries.

Perhaps some young ice hockey fans have heard the story about what happened at the 10th Winter Olympic Games in Grenoble (France) in 1968. Several players of the Soviet team arrived at one of the matches with skates which had no protective caps on the back ends. Their opponents demanded that the rules be strictly observed. That was a really awkward situation because our team simply did not have enough of those caps for everybody. The search for the caps postponed the beginning of the match. Players and the coaches became nervous and tempers, which could have easily been avoided, dampened the fighting spirit of world champions. In the final analysis the 30-minute unexpected delay had had a pernicious effect: the Soviet national team suffered defeat in that match.

In the matches of courtyard teams, perhaps, boys tend to be less strict in observ-



Ye. Mishakov

ing these rules, but that's wrong. When buying skates, never forget about the caps.

Boots have to be chosen to fit the foot snugly: only in this case will the ankle joint have proper support and dislocations and strains avoided. It is best of all to wear boots with woollen socks. They should be laced carefully, so that the skates are tightly-fitted, but the lacing should not be too tight, otherwise, your feet will become numb.

Sometimes it happens that your foot, which sits snugly and comfortably in the boot, feels unstable inside. This happens because the skates are riveted to the boots incorrectly. If the foot slips to the inside, the skate should be riveted closer to the inner part of the boot, if outside—to its external part.

At the back of the boot you should have a tall pad guard which will protect your foot from the puck. A pad is also placed under the boot's tongue.

Make sure your skates are always well sharpened. They can be sharpened either on a special sharpener for hockey skates,

on an electric sharpener or on an abrasive disc. After the game wipe the skates dry and put them in covers.

Experienced ice hockey players realise only too well how important it is to take good care of their skates so that they are always in excellent condition. Badly sharpened and badly fitted skates have an adverse effect on the player's game.

Yevgeny Mishakov, Merited Master of Sports, many-times world and European champion and twice Olympic champion, shares a few secrets with the beginners.

Faultless eye, calmness and a firm hand—this is all that is required for sharpening skates on an electric sharpener.

Before sharpening, check the sharpening disc. Its edge should be slightly convex. Then, when sharpening the skate lengthwise, you will get a shallow through all along its blade while the blade's edges will be razor sharp. If the disc's edge has lost its convex form, grind off the disc's edge with a whetstone.

Keep the boot and skates firmly in your hands. Slowly and smoothly bring it downwards, pressing the blade to the middle of the edge of the disc for 10 seconds. Watch with one eye along the blade, having closed the other. The shower of sparks should be directed exactly along the middle of the disc's edge and all along the blade's width. Bring the oval blade with the edge strictly along the tangent. Bring the skate up and down the disc two or three times to smooth off the blade slightly all along its width.

Don't tilt the skate. Keep it perpendicular to the disc. Include it only slightly to the side so that the skate's inner edge became a little sharper than its outer edge. Look along the skate's edge: its inner edge must be slightly higher than its external edge. Check the shallow through all along the edge. Place the second skate perpendicularly on the edge of the first and look against the light along the lower skate. You will see a little light segment and the dark sharp edges of the blade—it means that the skate is sharpened properly and there is a shallow trough along the length of the blade.

Naturally, one who sharpens skates is not always guaranteed against failure. It happened to me on several occasions. If you are excited

or nervous, the movements of your hands become inaccurate: you press the skate to the disc unevenly or you move the blade along the disc not smoothly enough, or you tilt the skate too far. Sometimes a spot of rust on the sides of the blade jams the skate; you think that you move it along the disc smoothly, but it progresses along in jerks.

Don't let all these flaws upset you. They are unavoidable at the beginning. With time your movements will be more confident and you will be a past master in sharpening.

Tiny burrs can be filed off with an oil-stone. Sharpen your skates regularly, advisable before each game.

If your skates are well sharpened, you can make any turn on the ice. Your friends for whom you sharpened their skates before the game will, too, keep on their feet while making sharp turns. If your team wins you will share in its success and that is always pleasant for an ice hockey player.

The Stick

Sometimes boys play hockey on asphalt or on snow doing nicely without the skates, but no player, even if he is only five, can do without a stick. Such a "player", if he is included in the team, is immediately ordered to tend the goal. Some boys think that a goalie can do without the stick.

Of course, this is not so. There's no ice hockey without the stick!

The stick is the second main component of the ice hockey player's gear. It is made of wood and has no metal parts. It is maximum 134.5 cm. long from the bend (the apex of the right angle) to the handle's end and a maximum 37.5 cm. from the heel to the end of the blade. In any of its part, the stick must not be wider than 7.5 cm. The exception is the goalie's stick the handle of which all along the 61 cm. from the bend, as well as the blade, are a maximum 10 cm. wide.

It is important for each player to select

the stick of the right length so that it is easy and comfortable to play. To determine the length of the stick correctly, place it with the end of the blade's tip vertically on the ice. As a rule, it must not be higher than your chin. True, some ice hockey players prefer using a shorter stick, because it is easier to dribble the puck with it. It must not be forgotten, however, that a short stick has an essential shortcoming: sometimes it is hard to reach the puck with it or receive a pass.

The stick number is selected depending on the style of skating, the manner of dribbling and the player's height. Sticks are numbered from 1 to 9. The smaller the number, the smaller (less obtuse) the angle formed by the handle and the blade. The further away from himself the player dribbles the puck, the bigger the stick number he needs. When dribbling the puck the blade must be flat against the ice.

Most adult players use sticks Nos. 4,5 or 6, although some masters prefer using sticks with smaller numbers, Valery Kharlamov, for instance. This stick is good for covering the puck. Sticks with small numbers are especially convenient in a crowd of players or in a tussle at the goal. Sticks with a more inclined blade are more difficult to handle in by-passing: such a blade makes controlling the puck close to the player harder, although it is much easier to stop the puck in front of the player with such a stick.

The stick is the ice hockey player's main weapon. That is why it must be carefully selected, tested and prepared for the game. Even the winding of the blade with insulation tape is very important. Uneven winding at a decisive moment will hinder the player from making a precise shot. How to wind the blade? One can begin

either with the blade's heel or from the end of it. The main thing is to tighten the tape properly so that the winding be even and strong.

Vyacheslav Starshinov, Merited Master of Sports, many-times world, European and twice Olympic champion, shares his secrets.

The selection of a proper stick is a very important thing. Each player selects a stick most convenient for him: one can guess the player's role in the team and even his character.

A long stick enables the player to expand his range of action and cover a greater area of ice but when playing at the board a short stick is more convenient. Vladimir Vikulov—a virtuoso of dribbling and a master of playing on the wing—prefers a short stick with a sharply curved blade. Konstantin Loktev played with a short but sloped stick.

Centre-forwards like longer sticks because their range of action is greater.

At the boards the player very often has to slip the puck almost under his skates. He has to by-pass at close quarters and make shorter and sharper movements. He dribbles the puck at the board almost blindly, relying on his intuition. In this case, naturally, short and rapid by-passing is more preferable. You will need a shorter stick with a curvier blade.

I liked long by-passing because it is more difficult to be body-checked. You have an excellent view of the puck and your opponent and take timely counter-measures.

How to hold the stick?

I suppose you noticed that the stick have signs on them: 'left', 'right'? This is to know for whom this or that stick is more convenient—for the right-handed or left-handed player. Take the stick in your hands and automatically you will grab the end of the stick with the hand which is more convenient for you. So, if in this stance you will see that the blade of your stick is turned to the left of you, it means that you are a left-handed player. If it looks to the right—you are a right-handed one.

Hold the stick firmly with both hands. This is very important during the game when you are blocked, your stick is lifted off the ice and you are body-checked.

The stick must be well balanced—the handle must be heavier than the blade. The



V. Starshinov

approximate relation of the stick is: $\frac{2}{3}$ of the weight of the stick—handle and $\frac{1}{3}$ —blade. The player is aware of the weight of the handle and practically doesn't feel the weight of the blade. If this relationship is violated, it will be difficult to handle the stick because it will seem to be too heavy.

Wind the stick with insulation tape so as to protect it. Start with the blade, winding the tape evenly in one layer. The top of the handle is wound so as to provide a better grip.

Protective Gear

The team was left on the ice short-handed. Only three Dynamo players faced the five Khimik players.

After the face-off, the puck rebounded against the board and was seized by the Khimik players... Attacks followed in waves and it seemed the puck was about to find its way into the Dynamo goal but every time one of the defenders blocked its path: the Dynamo men selflessly checked the puck with their bodies.

A spectator gasped:

"How can they stand all those blows? They must be black and blue all over..."

Yes, the Dynamo players had a hard time of it but there were no black eyes or bruises. It was the protective gear that helped them.

The rules of ice hockey permit blocking and body-checking. So players very often hit the ice. That's why protective gear is essential.

First and foremost, players have to protect feet—shins and knees. Pads with knee-guards will do well for the purpose. They can be made from fibre or duralumin by bending it to fit the shape of the foot. Felt flaps are fitted to the sides of the pads to protect the foot from side blows. Inside the pad there should be a lining made from thick, multilayered fabric or foam-rubber. Knee-caps are made from fibre. They are bent to fit the knees, lined with foam-rubber and rigidly connected to the pads. A piece of foam-rubber is placed between the pad and the shin and a sock is worn over the pad.

The goalie's guards protect both shins and hips. That's why they have to be cut from felt of a thickness that will allow the guards to be bent round the knee, because it is intended to guard the foot and leg not only from the front but also from the sides. To enable the goalie to bend his foot and the knee freely, the guard is made flexible in two pieces connected with sturdy leather thongs or laces. The place where the guard bends is covered with a small piece of felt which is sewed tightly to the hip part of the felt backing.

Narrow felt ribs are sewn to the goalie's pads so that they can absorb blows better.

Shoulder and breast pads protect the upper part of the player's body. They con-

sist of several parts connected by strings or thongs. Shoulder guards are made of fibre and they are bent in the same way as knee pads, with a foam-rubber lining added. The upper part of the arms down to the elbows, as well as the chest, can be protected with felt, leather or quilted cotton pads.

It is best to make elbow pads from leather, stuffing them with cotton or horse-hair. They are secured to the arm with rubber bands.

The shorts are made from quilted cotton with fabric shorts of a bigger size worn over them. The shorts are laced up in front and are held up by braces. The goalie's shorts have additional soft lining (for instance, foam-rubber).

Guards also protect the genitals from hits. It is made of duralumin or fibre and fastened by a belt or strings. Ready-made guards are best. If unavailable, felt or a padded cushion can be used.

The player's hands are protected by long gloves with fibre or bamboo inserts. The glove with which the goalie does not hold the stick has a "trap" sewed between the thumb and other fingers.

Special plastic helmets of various designs are used today. They must fit the head tightly and protect the forehead, the back of the head and the temples.

The goalies protect their face with special masks. It was Japan's national squad goalie who used a mask for the first time at the 1936 Olympic Games. It was a cage made from steel wire. Canadian goalie Jacques Plante was the first to use a fibre-glass mask which you see today. This simple mask is a bent fibre-glass plate secured to the head by thongs. At the 1965 World Championship one of the field players—Canadian Fred Dun-

smore—also wore a mask. A transparent convex plastic plate protected his face. This mask can easily be made from a piece of transparent fibre-glass.

Some players use special guards to protect the jaw and teeth. They are fastened to the helmet.

Protective gear is of particular importance to goalies. Many of them prefer old, well-worn gear, especially leg guards. The puck rebounds with greater force from new protectors. It takes quite a time to get used to a new glove-trap.

Goalies should see to it and select a comfortable stick.

Protectors should have a deep cut round the neck so that the goalie can bend his head freely watching the puck.

Coming out onto the ice don't forget to thoroughly check your protective gear. If everything is in order you won't have to worry.

The Ice Rink

Naturally, real ice hockey is played on real ice and not on the sidewalk cleared off snow or in the yard where patches of ice intermingle with the paths beaten in the snow or dirty asphalt.

Remember, ice hockey is a team game on ice: on ice and only on ice.

But how is a real hockey rink to be made? What is its size?

Top flight players use a rink 61 metres long and 30 metres wide. It is rectangular in shape with curved corners. It may be somewhat smaller however—51 metres long and 26 metres wide. It can be diminished by reducing the neutral zone and setting the goal closer to the backboards.

The rink is enclosed by the boards 1-1,2 metres high. The face boards can be

somewhat higher—approximately by 20 cm.—than the side ones. It is better not to make boards from plywood. Solid wooden boards are best. They can be dismantled and stored until the next season. They must be well secured. It is best of all to freeze them into the ice. Side boards must be smooth and without projections, the top rounded.

The doors to your rink box should open only on the outside. Incidentally, during the game the doors must be locked so that a player can not fall out if knocked against the boards.

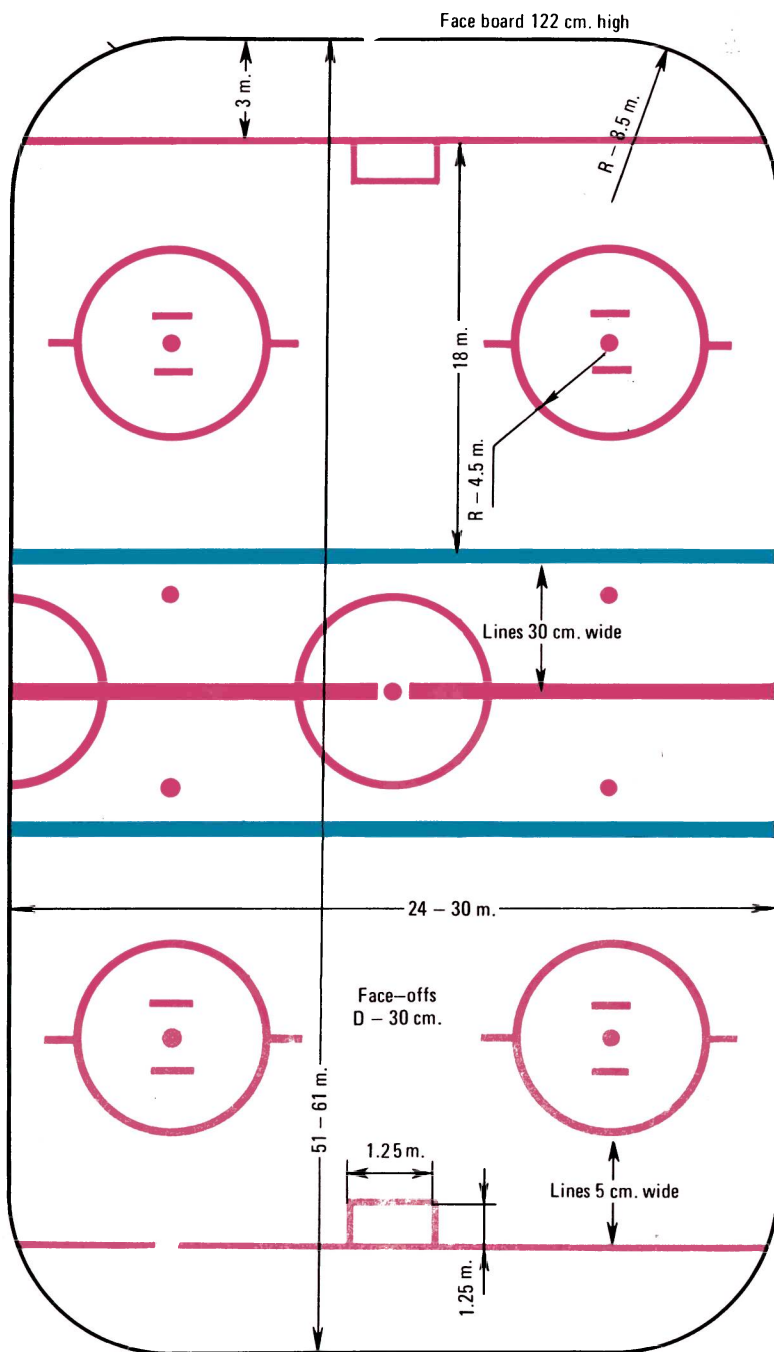
How to mark the rink? Blue lines are made 18 metres from the goal line. All the lines are 30 cm. wide. The face-off circles are also 30 cm. in diameter. After the paint dries, pour more water over the ice to protect the lines with a layer of ice.

The distance between the lines may be different: from 18 metres (on a 61-metre long rink) to 11 metres (on a shortened rink). The middle, or as it is often called the red line, is made in the middle of the rink.

The distance between the face boards and the goal-line can also be reduced if necessary.

The radius of the centre circle and the two face-off circles in each zone are 4.5 metres.

Goal size: 183 cm. wide and 122 cm. high. They are made from steel pipes with an outer diameter of 5 cm. Two vertical props (goal posts) are connected by a bar at the top. Two shaped frames from which a closed net is suspended catching the puck are the important components of the goal. Another net is attached to the upper frame inside the goal, but it hangs loose. The net serves as a shock-absorber for the puck.



Ice hockey rink

There is yet another important point. The goal must be reliably secured in the ice so as to avoid its displacement from the first light push and those endless debates in all courtyards: "Was it a goal or not?" The sides posts must have 3-5 cm. long pintles which can be easily inserted into holes drilled or cut in the ice.

It can happen that there is no place for a big regular-sized rink. There is a way out, though.

Make a small-size rink. Let it be much smaller than the one Tretyak or Yakushev play on. Never fear! These well-known masters used to play in their courtyards at one time. The minimum size of a rink is 25×12 metres. It can be rounded off with vertical snow walls frozen through with the help of water. Fix a row of boards at the foot of the wall so that the puck rebounds. Very few boards are required.

How to water the rink over and how to maintain it? Clean the area of your would-be rink from all debris and level it out. Scrape the snow, if there is any, to the boundaries of the future rink and make a small rampart from it, which, when iced-over, will prevent the water from draining off.

Before watering the rink check and see how deeply the ground is frozen. When

the ground is frozen to a depth of 5-6 cm., you begin watering the rink. Better do it on the day when it isn't snowing and the temperature is between -5° and -20°C . Specialists advise to water the rink with a half a centimetre thin layer of water. When the ice hardens, water the rink once again. You can start playing when the ice is about 8 cm. thick. The ice will gradually thicken to 15-20 cm.

Water for the purpose can be taken from water mains, from a well or a pond.

When the ice gets cut up, "repair" it—clean it of snow, water over, smooth out all the small scorings and give the rink an overall face-lift.

Make sure there is always a right angle between the surface of the ice and the boards. The puck should rebound from the boards properly in accordance with the calculations of the player, therefore, all the thick spots formed during the watering must be scraped off.

Finally, the rink can be made on the ice of a lake or a pond. We recommend shallow ponds or lakes. Such rinks can be used when the ice is 15 cm. thick.

I would like to remind boys that real ice hockey is impossible without proper ice. Don't be lazy therefore. Make even a small rink properly for the game you like.

Your Place on the Ice

Every boy who takes a stick in his hands for the first time immediately wants to be a forward. Naturally, it is much more exciting to score. Very often debates flare up among the boys in a courtyard team as to who will be a forward, defence-man or goalie. Everyone wants to be a forward and usually the argument is settled to the advantage of those who are stronger and older. Big boys become the forwards and small—defencemen.

However, it is impossible for all to play in the attack, someone has to defend and prevent the opponent from scoring. Real ice hockey, therefore, is impossible without defenders and goalies. A team will never win if its forwards are weak. A team which lacks good goalies and defenders also will not win.

How to find your place in the game? Which role will be best for you? An experienced coach will help you to find the answer. Try yourself in goal, in defence and in attack.

All the “posts” in ice hockey are interesting and all the roles on the ice important.

The Goalie

The goal should be tended by a physically strong boy. A weakling would collapse under the strain of an ice hockey match. The goalie, as distinct from a defenceman or a forward, is on the ice all through the game.

When selecting a goalie, coaches usually pay attention to his character. Is

he courageous enough? Will he be able to carry out a complex and important role?

There are many examples when a goalie learned technique and amassed experience, but was incapable of more... He lacked other characteristics. Some have weak nerves, others lack courage.

The goalie plays the main role in the ice hockey ensemble. If he plays badly, no defence will save the team from the defeat. Carl Wetzel, a goalie of the US team, made 75 saves at the Vienna World Championship. No other goalies had carried such a load at world championships. Imagine, if he let them all through?

Such a goalie deserves nothing but respect. He'll be the team's favourite and everyone will try to protect him. If something doesn't turn out right at a training session or if he tended the goal badly in the last game, his team-mates will encourage and support him.

The goalie must be sure that his goal is secure. His uncertainty and fear will immediately “contaminate” his team-mates and their play will be affected. Naturally, the opponents will immediately notice it, start playing more energetically and finally snatch victory.

Boys who want to play in the goal should be told straight from the beginning: the puck strikes hard leaving bumps and bruises on the body. The goalie may fail to see a puck or have no time to react to it when it suddenly flies out from behind the player who stands close by or changes its flight. Or the rival can send the puck powerfully from a close range, so

powerfully that the goalie will have no time to prepare for it and the puck will strike him painfully.

Real goalies are strong and courageous people.

Experienced players are right when they say that it is impossible to win a game without a good goalie. The fate of the game, the success of the team and its popularity depend greatly on him. Realising the responsibility of his role the goalie should train with zeal and prepare himself thoroughly for the competitions.

"The goalie is half the team"—that's how his role is assessed.

The goalie's basic stance is of great importance when learning the technique. It must give him good stability and enable him to move swiftly in the goal mouth, to react in time to the flying puck.

Place your feet slightly apart and bend your knees. Keep the body loose and bend slightly forward. Hold the stick at the middle of the handle with your strongest hand so that it can move freely along the stick. Select the place on the stick to make sure that the blade's lower edge is always pressed against the ice. Keep your free hand at the side with the palm open. Do not press it against your body. Bend it slightly in the elbow so as to be ready to catch the puck or repulse it.

If an opponent makes a long shot, take up your position on the goal-line. When the puck is shot from a distance of about 10 metres, the goalie should move somewhat forward, so as to cover the greater part of the goal with his body and stick. This must be done before the moment when the opponent takes a shot, because if moving, the goalie will find it hard to react to the shot quickly and accurately.

Some goalies repel the puck on their knees. This is wrong. The rivals have more leeway, because the goalie in this position has less opportunity to catch the puck, repel it with the stick, legs, etc. There was one such episode during the Central Army Club vs Army Club (Leningrad) match. Vladimir Petrov, one of the most formidable Central Army Club forwards, upon receiving the puck, swung his stick to put more power into his hit and the Leningrad goalie dropped to his knees deciding that it would be more convenient for him to parry Petrov's strong shot. The latter, seeing that the goalie was already down on his knees, and couldn't move, sent the puck lightly into the goal's upper corner and the goalie was helpless to do anything.

There is no one to correct a goalie's mistake. That's why the goalie's post in any team is so responsible and honourable—be it in a courtyard or national team.

Vladislav Tretyak, Merited Master of Sports, many-times world, European and twice Olympic champion, shares his secrets.

I think that in modern ice hockey the success of the goalie's play depends largely on the speed of his reaction; on whether he can react in time to a sudden shot. The speed of reaction can be developed by any exercises, which require fast and sharp movements. I think that many means are useful: jumping, running, acrobatics and punching a bag.

Here are a few exercises which will help improve the speed of movement:

I take two tennis balls, throw them against the wall and try to catch them. At the beginning I failed to catch them, that's why I threw only one ball, either with my right or my left hand.

The speed of reaction can be trained by playing table tennis, especially by playing against an opponent who is good in attack: he



V. Tretyak

will give you hard time defending and repelling the ball.

Another exercise. I stand with my face to the wall (at some distance from it). One of my comrades, standing behind me, sends the ball strongly against the wall with his tennis racket. I have either to catch the ball on the rebound or repel it. Such hits from the back are unexpected and I have to do all I can.

Sometimes I stand in one corner and my partners throw the puck into another corner. This exercise, too, is good for improving the reaction.

There is yet another useful and interesting exercise with two goalies. One of the goalies constantly looms ahead of the second one covering him and then all of a sudden lets a flying puck pass. The second goalie has only seconds to react to the puck. This exercise is particularly useful, because during the game forwards of the opposing team try to hide the puck and deprive the goalie of the possibility to follow the course of the game...

Defenceman

A defenceman must be able to do many things. He must skate freely and swiftly backwards making sharp turns, change the direction of skating quickly and be steady on his skates.

Of great value in defencemen is their ability to shut off with lightning speed the attacks of opponents and help mount dangerous counter-attacks. This ability can be acquired only by mastering such methods of play as taking the puck by body-checking, passing it to your teammate skating ahead from any position and especially with a long shot and at a tangent of the rink.

It is not accidental that the coaches emphasise the importance of accurate passes from any position.

Very often a debate arises between the forwards and defencemen. Assume that a forward found himself in the clear in the neutral zone and a defenceman failed to pass the puck to him as he lunged down the rink. In this case the defenceman usually accuses the forward of leaving his place too quickly, without giving him enough time to control the puck. The defenceman is wrong. He must pass the puck to his partner whenever he asks for it.

The defenceman is the servant of the attack and he subordinates all his actions fully to the intentions of the forwards.

A defenceman must be able to shoot powerfully and accurately. Pay special attention to the shots which are made after the puck is stopped. A defenceman in the opponent's zone may dribble the puck to a much lesser degree than his teammates—forwards.

Now a few words about the tactics of the defenceman. His main task is to make the goal safe from the attacks of an opposition player, that's why they spend most of the game in their zone.

Experienced defencemen know that rivals who are close to the goal are especially dangerous: they can take a shot at goal at

any moment. To prevent them from doing this they must attentively check the rival. They must be constantly on guard. Keep your stick always under the opponent's stick so as to be able to raise it at the right moment and deprive an opponent of the possibility of getting the puck. If the defenceman fails to prevent an opponent from taking a shot, he must block part of the goal with his body, trying, however, not to obscure the goalie's view.

Attack the rival in the corners of the rink with caution, making sure that he doesn't outplay you. Quickly skating up to your opponent stop abruptly about a stick-length away from him. This will deprive him of a speed manoeuvre and of an opportunity to by-pass you and break up towards the goal.

Good defencemen try to take part in the attack on the opponent's goal. They are especially active when the team outnumber the opposing team. Defencemen take up position at the border of the opponent's zone from which it is convenient to receive a pass or make a powerful shot at the goal, or pass it accurately to partners. If the defenceman has an equal choice: to by-pass an opponent or make a pass, he must pass the puck to his partner in the better position without thinking twice.

The defencemen co-ordinate all their actions with the goalie carrying out his instructions. If the goalie leaves his place in the goal, the nearest defenceman must take his place immediately.

Defencemen must always be on guard. No matter how the game shapes up, the defenceman must always remember that he is the mainstay of defence.

Both today and in the future defencemen with a great range of action will be in

big demand in ice hockey. They must be reliable guardsmen of their goal and at the same time show a lot of initiative, be active in attack and never forget their duties.

Nikolai Sologubov, Merited Master of Sports, and Olympic champion who thrice received the prize of the best defenceman of the world championship, shares his secrets.

What should a defenceman be in the contemporary ice hockey? Brave and courageous? To check the puck with his body and try to be the winner in body-checking? This is all quite right. But if a defenceman can do only this, he can hardly be called an extra-class player.

The defencemen long ago became equal partners in attacks and are just as good in shooting at the goal as the forwards. A good defenceman can foresee the development of the action and a possible continuation of the attack several moves ahead and at the same time cover the most dangerous spot in defence.

A player may know well this or that method but be unable to execute it in a way dictated by the swiftly changing situation on the ice.

Time during the game can be counted in tenths of a second and a brief movement cannot be broken into parts: first to take the puck away the opponent, then break away from him, then look whom pass the puck to and, finally, pass it on to your mates. An extra-class defenceman can do it in one go, practically without pause. Such a swiftness of action is an excellent prelude for organising a sudden attack or a swift counter-attack.

Today it is not only power play of the forwards that ensures the success of an attack but also the active play of the defencemen. We, for example, (I'm talking about the Central Army Club defencemen) have always behaved as if a second echelon in attack, reliably bolstering our forwards and shooting at the opponent's goal at any chance.

If you loose the puck, don't stand there spreading your arms, do not try to find the guilty ones, anyone can make a mistake. Otherwise, you will never return the lost seconds when the balance has to be immediately restored and the initiative snatched away.



N. Sologubov

Wings

We have already said that any boy, beginning to play hockey, dreams of becoming a forward, by-passing defencemen, tricking the goalie and scoring. Later on, young players begin to realise that it is also interesting and honourable to play in defence or to be a goalie, but at the start everyone wants to be a forward. They all dream of being Alexander Maltsevs, Valery Kharlamovs, Alexander Yakushevs, Helmut Balderises, Sergei Kapustins or Sergei Makarovs.

But it isn't a simple thing to become a good forward. What is valued most in wings? Explosive actions. It means that they must possess a take-off speed, suddenness, a spurt unexpected for the opponent and a quick reaction. The wing more often than any other player has to drive his way to the enemy's goal without backing, constantly encountering strong opposition and body-checking. Therefore, he must be physically strong and at the same time very agile. It is hardly reasonable for him to attack head on. Often it is much better to resort to a ruse or a feint.

What technical methods are the most important for the wings to have? All of them. By-passing, passing and shooting at the goal. None of them can be given preference.

If an opponent does not like by-passing or a favourable situation develops to by-pass—go ahead and by-pass.

If your partner is ahead of you in the neutral zone, if he has taken up an excellent position for a shot, or, perhaps, the opponent doesn't like your pass—do not hesitate and make a pass. If you are in a favourable position for a shot—go ahead and take a shot.

One must be well aware when it is most expedient to use this or that method.

For instance, the puck is on your side of the rink. If you keep dribbling it in an attempt to by-pass the opponent, you'll never be able to mount an aggressive and swift attack: the adversaries will have plenty of time to return home and take an active part in the defence. Therefore, on your half of the rink various passes, both diagonal and lateral would be the best. Don't forget that the puck flies three times faster than the player skates. Making a good pass, you will leave the enemy's for-

wards out of the play, because they will be unable to get back in their zone in time. A collective attack with the help of a good pass will leave the opponent guessing as to your intentions.

When the forwards lose the puck, they should immediately try to regain it, coming to grips with the rival. Should they fail to recover the puck, they must immediately get back and take part in the defence.

The wings must try and play in close coordination with all their partners and especially with the centre forward. They must constantly look for an opening and be ready to receive a pass, to play well at the board and come out a winner in the clash with the rival.

Boris Mayorov, Head of the Hockey Department of the USSR Sports Committee, Merited Master of Sports, many-times world, European and Olympic champion, shares his secrets.

The requirements which are made in modern hockey of a forward are very great indeed. He must be able to attack, to possess a powerful and accurate shot, a set of feints, high speed, and be able to make accurate passes. Besides, a good forward is always there to help his defencemen.

Here are a few general hints for a forward:

When attacking with the puck, try to head straight for the goal. Do not let yourself be driven into the corner of the rink. It is exactly where the opponents' defencemen want you to be, because a player with a puck away from the goal is not very dangerous.

The success comes from the combination of the collective and individual actions. It's good if you by-pass your opponent well, if you have a few well worked-out feints. But it's bad if you are too eager to by-pass, if you don't like passing the puck to your partner, who may be in a better position than you. It's bad if you are weak in finding your bearings or if you dribble the puck without taking the least heed of your partners.



B. Mayorov

It is difficult to head straight for the goal: the opponent is waiting and ready to tackle you. He is ready to body-check you. That's why the forward must have courage and meet body-checking befittingly and endure pain.

Your shot will be dangerous if it is not only powerful and accurate, but at the same time is sudden for the opponents' goalie. In today's hockey one must be able to shoot without preparation, from any position and with either hand.

Playing in the defence, it is important to get back in time, if the attack has failed. I was winger and usually, when skating back, first followed the enemy's winger and then passed him on to my own defenceman, while switching over to checking the enemy's defenceman, trying to block him and deprive him of activity.

The forward, as you realise, has to move quite a lot about the rink. It is understandable that he must be well trained and physically fit. I advise boys to skate as much as possible and also to take up other sports and above all, play football and basketball.

The Centre

The centre, undoubtedly, plays the main role in modern ice hockey. Usually, coaches put in this place the most talented player who has mastered all the intricacies

of the game and is a past master in all complex situations.

The centre very often finds himself in a tight spot—because he plays in the area of the rink most dangerous for his rival. He is more often than not the spearhead of an attack and that is why the success of his actions is determined, above all, by his tactical thinking and individual technical mastery.

He must possess the best qualities of forwards and defencemen and have a soundly expressed inclination towards collective play. A team lunges into an attack—the centre forward is its organiser and a helper for his partners. The team switches to defence—he beats back the onslaught of the opponents together with his defencemen. If the centre forward is weak in the attack or in the defence, it immediately tells on the action of the entire team.

The centre forward must be physically more trained than the rest of the players. Everyone in the team must be a hard worker, but he must work harder than all. To be good at passing is a must for all, but the centre must be top-notch in it. He must be able to pass the puck accurately to his partner from any position in a grand-master style. Only then the team will play a well-gearred game.

The centre is active up and down ice. He organises the attack and takes part in the defence—depending on the concrete situation on the ice.

As soon as he recovers the puck near his goal, he more often than not sends it to one of his wingers as they break up ice toward the enemy goal. Skating forward, he chooses the spot for receiving the puck.

If the puck is lost and the team gives up the struggle to regain it in the attacking

zone, the centre immediately returns back to take part in the defence.

In attack his duties are very much like those of the wingers. Moreover, he is responsible for the actions of the entire team as well.

The very essence of the ice hockey is to score and to prevent the opponent from scoring. From what position on the rink is it easiest to score? In the usual situation—from the spot right in front of the goal. Simplifying things, it can be said that the essence of the game in defence is to make that spot in front of your goal safe, while the essence of an attack is to render this spot open before the opponent's goal.

This is the zone of action for the centre. This zone sees the key moments of your attack, or the decisive moments of foiling the opponents' attack.

It doesn't mean that the entire game is played along the central longitudinal axis of the rink, but the very logic tells us that it is the shortest distance to the opponent's goal.

Besides, it is easier to outplay an adversary in the centre, to avoid body-checking, because there is space to the right or left of the attacker.

There's yet another point. During the conventional development of an attack, a trio of forwards are encountered by the trice defencemen two of whom cover the wingers. If in this situation the centre forward manages to outplay his opponent, he finds himself alone with the goalie.

Even a slightest mistake in this zone is wrought with the gravest consequences for defenders.

Maurice ("Rocket") Richard, famous Canadian ice hockey player who was first

to score more than 600 times in the NHL matches, former captain of the Montreal Canadians, shares his secrets.

Ice hockey demands good physical fitness from each player.

Before the game in the dressing-room and on the ice practice your shots, turns, change of direction, starts and stops. However, do not train to exhaustion, remember that you have only to warm up for the game.

Before the game and during it, concentrate. At the same time be at ease, first and foremost, get joy from the game.

Do not be closed-up, malicious and irritable. You'll only waste your energy, tire yourself out and lose an opportunity to show all you are capable of in the game.

Listen to your coach who knows your merits and shortcomings. If you follow his advice and instructions, you'll get rid of your shortcomings and improve your skill.

Even the best of coaches, however, will not be able to prepare a genuine master player if he fails to show sufficient will, stubbornness and conscientiousness.

Train with maximum diligence, play clean, give the game you all, all your being and the

main thing, enjoy playing this fastest and most exciting game in the world.

Now a few words of advice to the forward.

Attack at any opportunity, attack swiftly—make a dash, pick up maximum speed quickly, deceive your opponent with a feint and shoot at the goal.

If a defenceman is standing in the way it is best of all to shoot, or to by-pass. If he is slowly skating back and blocks your shot, take the puck behind the goal and make a pass to your partner coming from backfield. If the defenceman blocks his goalie and obstructs his view, shoot low into one of the corners of the goal. When the defenceman is in the immediate vicinity of the forward with the puck, pass it to your partner so that he can make a well-aimed shot, or, using a feint, drop the puck to your comrade.

The puck-carrier must remember that before passing the puck to his partner, he must detract the opponent to himself. If he fails to fall for your ruse, don't pass the puck but better shoot it yourself.

When a forward with the puck finds himself in the corner, he must pass the puck only if his partner is in the open. Otherwise, he must take the puck behind the goal, detract the defenceman and pass the puck to the free partner.

The Snowman Tells His Story

The snowman has become an emblem and symbol of the Moscow ice hockey tournament for the Prize of the newspaper *Izvestia*. Here is what he has to say.

The Long Road of the Puck

Ice hockey with the puck, or Canadian hockey, was seen for the first time on March 3, 1875, in Montreal at the Victoria Skating Rink. There were nine players in each of the two student teams. R. Smith, the initiator of the game, evolved the rules which presented an odd, but as it was soon realised, mixture of various laws governing field hockey, bandy, and American football and seasoned with Mr. Smith's own ideas. He used a ball for field hockey cut in half. Later this "puck" was replaced by a wooden one and then by a rubber disc.

Naturally, ice hockey of those days only looked like the game which attracts us today. The gear was different and the players did not use helmets. There was no goalie's mask as yet. The game was slow and tactically monotonous. Of course, there were no masters who could do anything and know everything about ice hockey. There were no dead shots, head-spinning feints or artistic body-checking. The whirlwind pace, which today is quite normal, the pace when the players give their all in less than a minute, requiring frequent replacements, such a pace was unthinkable in those days.

That hundred-year-old hockey would

seem strange and perhaps even uninteresting to us today.

Canadians still cannot arrive at a definite conclusion as to the birthplace of the sport. One thing is certain: the popularity of the new game grew swiftly, and as early as 1884, the first professional teams appeared.

Though, players still came out in teams of nine. It took some time before the National Ice Hockey Association, the predecessor of the present National Hockey League, within the framework of which the strongest Canadian and American players compete today, introduced the rule which declared a team may have a maximum six players on the rink.

Do you, by any chance, know the name of Francis Nelson? No? He was a fisherman and an ice hockey enthusiast who suggested they put a fishing net over the goal. That's how the net appeared on the goals and all the debates as to whether the puck crossed the line of the goal or not became a rarity. Now the puck passing the goalie is caught in the net.

The Canadians turned out to be not only past masters but also fanatical enthusiasts of the new game. Naturally, very soon ice hockey crossed the southern boundary of the maple leaf country and came to the United States.

Tournaments began to be staged in Canada, which already had seen many years of play. In 1892, the Governor General of Canada Lord Stanley presented the winning team of the national championship with a silver cup. Today the

Stanley Cup has become the most coveted prize for all professional teams.

Since Canadian professionals were undoubtedly stronger than any amateur team, Mr. Montague Allan presented a cup for the best amateur team. Ever since this popular prize is called the Allan Cup.

Soon the game came to Europe. In 1890, the Czech Amateur Athletic Union produced ice hockey rules. Four years later it was demonstrated at the Paris Ice Palace.

In 1906, French, Belgian, Czech and Swiss representatives founded the International Ice Hockey League and two years later the first European championship was held. Ice hockey entered the orbit of Big-Time Sport.

I bet you didn't know when the world championship was staged for the first time? In 1924. This tournament was preceded by European championships: between 1910 and 1923 there were seven European championships.

The first Olympic ice hockey tournament was held in Antwerp in 1920 during the Summer Olympic Games. Four years later the ice hockey made its appearance at the winter Olympic Games.

The Soviet national team entered the international "sports orbit" for the first time in 1954.

Its debut turned out to be a lucky: the Soviet national squad became the world and European champions.

The victory of the impudent newcomers, who dared to encroach upon the authorities for decades establishing themselves, created a sensation. It must be said that the game came to the Soviet Union only recently: the first official ice hockey match was played on December 11, 1946.

The Soviet players had neither experience nor tradition. Players had difficulty in lifting the puck off the ice. Perhaps, it wasn't so bad at the beginning, because the boards were very low, approximately 15 cm. high. They were borrowed from hockey with the ball, called bandy.

Naturally, it took time to get used to the new stick. The blade seemed to be absurd and inconvenient and the experienced players tried to make a stick for themselves, the blade of which was rounded in shape.

In one of Anatoly Tarasov's books there is a funny episode, which shows how hard the new sport was being mastered.

In the team trained by Tarasov there was a goalie who had great experience in playing bandy. Goalies in this sport play without a stick and quite naturally a huge and unweildy goalie's stick intended for the ice hockey with the puck irritated Tarasov's goalie and prevented him from catching the flying or sliding puck. That's why at critical moments such goalies threw the stick aside and caught the puck with their hands.

Once, Tarasov recalls, the conflict between the goalie and the stick reached its limit.

The game had hardly begun when the referee summoned the team's captain and announced that he was sending the goalie off because he came out without his stick.

The captain skated to the goal and began to reprimand the goalie for letting his team down.

Instead of offering an excuse, the goalie got his back up and, controlling himself with difficulty, said:

"Call that referee over, I'll explain to him what's what..."

The referee skated up and then the goalie showed him a stick.

It was a tiny stick tied to his wrist with a string and hidden behind the glove. It wasn't a "stick" but just a symbol.

The goalie was not trying to be original or witty. It was very simple: a big stick would be in the goalie's way.

The referee shook his head and cancelled his decision. The goalie remained in the goal and played the game with his miniature "stick".

Everything was strange and unexpected and there was hardly any optimist who would speculate that some years later Soviet hockey players, who just began to learn the ABC of the ice hockey would thrash their adversaries, Canadians included.

The Soviet ice hockey developed along its own road, inimitable and original.

There were mistakes and setbacks, it was difficult to guarantee against them. Not every experiment ended in success.

There were no stadiums, indoor arenas: nearly everyone was convinced that hockey was not for indoor areas and that the players felt much better on outdoor rinks with a slight wind and frost. Sometimes from an ally the frost turned into an enemy. Nevertheless, ice hockey marched confidently forward. Very soon success and victories came, which amazed the sporting world.

What were the assets?

A huge love towards this sport, the players' exceptional enthusiasm and selflessness. The experience and skills taken from the bandy. Collectivism, partnership, hurricane speeds the players were used to in bandy, and an excellent fitness which enabled the players to keep up the pace right to the end of the game. Soviet play-

ers amassed experience in heated battles and looked for strong and experienced adversaries.

It was our luck to find them. We found excellent players and measured our own degree of mastership and our class against theirs.

Who Helped Us?

The Czechoslovak ice hockey team LTZ-Prague came to Moscow in February 1948.

Sports fans probably remember that Czechoslovak players competing in the Olympic Games in Saint-Maurice, captured second place (after the Canadians). Incidentally, they registered a draw with the founder of world ice hockey.

At last it was time for the long-awaited matches. The test in battle and the strict and sober evaluation of one's own strength and possibilities.

Moscow select stood up to the trial. A draw, a win and a defeat—such was the tally of the three matches with the experienced opponents.

But the significance of the visits of first-class players was not only in the outcome of each of the three matches.

The rookies saw real hockey and got acquainted with one of the leading ice hockey schools with a long-standing tradition.

Czechoslovak players had long chats with the Soviet players and generously shared their secrets with them, held training sessions with the debutants and helped them master the intricacies of ice game. The silver prize-winners realised that they were helping their future competitors but it didn't stop them from being sincere and good comrades.

Experienced players who had many years of playing ice hockey behind them advised their Soviet colleagues to play as much as they could: it is while playing in important matches where players show maximum energy and diligence, they said, that players develop quickly and improve their mastership.

Soviet ice hockey was reducing its historical lagging behind leading foreign schools by other means: coaches increased the hours spent on training. According to prominent Soviet specialists, both the player and the team in one hour of intensive, creative and well-organised training manage to do much more than in the three periods of a match.

The debut in the international arena in March 1954 proved that the path chosen by the Soviet ice hockey was correct and fruitful and that the efforts have not been in vain.

Olympic Gold

On January 27, 1956, in the Italian Dolomite Alps, at a small resort town of Cortina D'Ampezzo, Soviet ice hockey players made their debut at the Olympic Games in their match with the Swedish team.

The team coached by Arkady Chernyshev ended the first period in a draw 1-1. In the second and third periods the debutants, playing against the Tre Kronors, scored twice in each period and ended the game with the score of 5-1 in their favour. The Olympic tournament in those days was held in two stages: first qualifying matches to determine the best teams and then the finals.

The Soviet team played seven victorious games in the Dolomite Alps—twice beat-

ing Sweden (in the second match with the score 4-1), thrashing the team from Switzerland 10-3, then outplaying the joint German team 8-0, beating Czechoslovakia 7-4, the United States 4-0 and Canada 2-0.

The debutants became Olympic champions.

The next Olympic Games were held in 1960 in Squaw Valley (USA).

Here the Games' host—the American players—became the Soviet team's main rivals.

At first everything was shaping up well—the Soviet squad outplayed the Czechoslovak boys 8-5. But then ... then the team lost the first point, the match against the Swedes ending in a draw 2-2. Setbacks also followed in the games with the Americans and Canadians. The Soviet national team had to be content with bronze.

According to specialists, the weakening of the formerly redoubtable defence bastions became one of the main reasons of the retreat of the Soviet squad: the defencemen "aged" while the young blood, which could have replaced the veterans, were not ready for Olympic trials.

The Soviet team arrived at the 1964 Olympic Games held in the Tirolean Alps (Innsbruck) not as rookies, but as favourites. The forecasters were not mistaken. The Soviet national team had practically no competition.

The first match held no secrets—the Hungarian team yielded 1-19 and this score became a record for the 9th Olympic Games.

Then the Soviet boys met the champions of the previous Olympic Games and confidently won 5-1.



Grenoble

The next match against the Czechoslovak team, however, turned out to be a difficult one.

Veniamin Alexandrov and Alexander Almetov, famous ice hockey grand-masters who for many years played in the same trio, scored twice, while Anatoly Irssov raised the count to 3-1 and Konstantin Loktev, the third player from our strongest trio, Almetov's and Alexandrov's partner, made it 4-1. The outcome of the match was clinched.

Despite the Czechoslovak team's playing a stronger game after the interval the Soviet boys still won 7-5.

Then followed a series of more or less easy games. In the subsequent five days the USSR squad played three matches and easily won all of them scoring 35 goals and not letting a single puck through. The players of the Swiss team (15-0), the joint German team

(10-0) and, finally, Finland (10-0) were defeated.

The tournament concluded with matches against the Tre Kronors and the Canadians. Both our opponents sought the gold.

The Tre Kronors had great hockey aces in its line-up: Sven Johansson (Tumba), Ulf Sterner, Nils Johansson and Ronald Stoltz.

Scales tipped now to one side now to the other. The defenceman Alexander Ragulin opened the count with the Swede Arlund quickly equalising. Ragulin's partner in defence, Eduard Ivanov scored again but the same Arlund, taking an advantage of a mistake our defencemen made at the beginning of the third period, brought the Soviet players' advantage down to 2-2.

Very soon Leonid Volkov scored again and a bit more than a minute later our



Sapporo

defenceman Viktor Kuzkin scored too bringing the score to 4-2.

A day later the Soviet boys played against the Canadians, who were in the lead for two periods and it was only towards the second interval that Vyacheslav Starshinov equalised (2-2).

The teams were resting, getting ready for the final third period, when one of the Soviet tourists burst into the dressing room and blurted out:

"Martin's warming up."

Yes, the Canadian coach came up with a surprise. At the decisive moment of the match he placed Martin in goal. Although he was unwell and completely unprepared for the match, Seth Martin was intended to be the block which would save the tired Canadians from defeat.

In the very first minute, however, Veniamin Alexandrov scored with his first shot at the goal. This turned out to be the deci-

sive puck. The Soviet national team won 3-2 and, gleaming 14 points out of the 14, became Olympic champions for the second time.

At the 10th Winter Olympic Games held in Grenoble (1968) the ice hockey tournament was held differently: there were no preliminaries and final games. All the eight teams lunged straight into the tussle for the gold.

The entire sports world was convinced that "again no one would check the Soviet ice hockey machine". This thought was bandied around and discussed in many articles and reviews.

For instance the American magazine *Sports Illustrated* wrote that if 21 years ago no one even played ice hockey in the Soviet Union, today it boasted of more than a million players and all of them played in such a way that the two coaches Anatoly Tarasov and Arkady Chernyshev

could say that it was exactly the hockey they would have liked to see. Eighteen of the best make the Soviet team, the team which became amateur world champion for five years in succession and, undoubtedly, in Grenoble would take the gold Olympic medals before the Swedes, Canadians, Czechoslovaks and Americans.

The Soviet players won with difficulty in Grenoble. For the first time they experienced the bitterness of defeat: the world champions lost to the Czechoslovak team (4-5). The Soviet players beat the teams of Finland (8-0), the GDR (9-0), USA (10-2), the FRG (9-1), Sweden (3-2). Everything was to be decided in the last match with the Canadians.

A few hours before this match the teams of Czechoslovakia and Sweden came onto the ice. If the Tre Kronors had lost, the Czechoslovak team would have become the Olympic champion. The tense struggle ended in a draw 2-2, and the Soviet team had a hard task on their hands—to outplay the team of the maple leaf country.

Soviet players excellently coped with the task beating the Canadians 5-0.

The ice hockey world began preparations for the next White Olympic Games in Sapporo.

The years between the Olympic Games passed quickly. They were filled with acute and exciting struggles of leading players in the USSR championships and international competitions.

During the period between Grenoble and Sapporo the Soviet national team won three world championships. But these victories were not won without work—successes in major and responsible competitions demanded a big

effort and a good preparation of the team.

The 1969 World Championship in Stockholm was most memorable for the Soviet hockey. In those days even rookies made their debut on the ice of Johannehov in the USSR line-up: the team was renewed by more than a third. The new players established a firm foothold in the national squad and it would have been hard to imagine the team in Sapporo and later in Innsbruck without Valery Kharlamov and Alexander Maltsev, Boris Mikhailov and Vladimir Lutchenko, Vladimir Petrov, who made their debut in 1969 in Stockholm.

The rookies of 1970—goalie Vladislav Tretyak, defencemen Valery Vasilyev, Gennady Tsygankov and forward Vladimir Shadrin who played on the national team from 1971—came to the Olympics in Sapporo.

The combat line-up of world champions is being constantly renewed, with fresh forces joining the national squad. Forward Yuri Blinov and goalie Alexander Pashkov made their debut at the 11th White Olympiad.

The nucleus of the team, however, consisted of excellent masters who had to defend their title of Olympic champions, won four years ago at Grenoble. There were eight such players in the team: defencemen Alexander Ragulin and Igor Romishevsky, Vitaly Davydov and Victor Kuzkin and forwards Anatoly Firsov, Vladimir Vikulov, Yevgeny Mishakov, and Yevgeny Zimin. Four veterans came to Sapporo twice Olympic champions—Davydov, Kuzkin, Ragulin and Firsov.

The 1972 Olympic Tournament was special one, extremely fast-flowing—the

national squad came onto the ice only five times. Naturally, in such a truly sprint distance the value of a point went up as never before. Tension and drama of the Olympic struggle doubled since five teams instead of three really vied for the medals.

No one could even think that the Swedish team, whose coach Bill Harris declared that they were going to Sapporo to bag gold, would not even make the trio and fail to get not only gold but also silver and bronze!

There are no weak adversaries at the Olympic Games and this truth was proved in February 1972 at the 11th Olympic Games. An undoubted favourite—the national of Czechoslovakia—lost to the Americans, Swedes—to Finns and, finally, the Soviet team lost a point in the game with the Tre Kronors.

At first it looked as if the team from the USSR would win without difficulty. The Soviet players led with 2-0, then 3-1, but the Swedes managed to equalise—3-3.

The Tre Kronors' chances to win gold medals grew when on the same day the Czechoslovak team lost 1-5 to the Americans.

The match with the Americans turned out to be not very difficult for the Soviet boys: they won with a convincing margin of 7-2. Then outplayed the Polish team 9-3. Toward the final game with the Czechoslovak national, which actually turned out to be the final, the Soviet squad occupied the first place in the tournament table: it had seven points out of eight possible.

The rest of the teams lagged behind. The Swedes, who had lost to the Czechoslovak team (1-2) had five points, while the

Czechoslovak team and the Americans—six points each.

An interesting situation developed on the last day of the tournament.

The Soviet team could win either the first or second place. Even a draw in the final match with the Czechoslovak team meant gold for it.

As for the Czechoslovak players they could find themselves in any of the first places. The victory would put them in the lead, a draw—in the second place and a defeat—into the fourth place (on condition that the Swedes could outplay the Finns) or in the third (if the Finns won).

The last day of the Olympic tournament finally came. The first to come out onto the ice were the Swedes and the Finns. Victory meant nothing for the Finns, nevertheless, they thrashed the Tre Kronors 5-4. Regardless of the outcome of the final match, the Swedes lost their chance for prize. The match between the Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union brought the victory to the latter (5-2). Thus, the boys from the USSR took the gold Olympic medals for the third time in succession.

Silver went to the USA and bronze to the Czechoslovak team.

Four years flew by and Soviet players once again came to the old, familiar Innsbruck.

National squads of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia were recognised generally as favourites. Practically only these two teams could compete for the Olympic gold.

Twelve national teams took part in the Olympic tournament and played qualifying matches according to the results of which groups A and B were drawn up. Among the strongest were the players



from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Finland, the USA, Poland and the FRG.

Here is how Valery Kharlamov, a leading Soviet player, spoke about this tournament:

"The tournament was much easier than usual: Swedes—our traditional opponents—failed to come and also we had to play only once with the Czechoslovak team. At the same time the tournament was a difficult one, because the outcome of the gold medal was decided in a single game. In sport no one is guaranteed against defeat. If we had lost to Czechoslovak team only once ... it would have been curtains for us...

"The game with Czechoslovak team turned out to be difficult and nervous.

The Czechoslovaks tried to capitalise on counter-attacks. One mistake—and first Milan Novy and then Ivan Hlinka broke away from our defencemen. In both cases the Czechoslovaks instantaneously found the best decision. I think, it is exactly this that makes modern ice hockey attractive—seconds that count. The speed needed to take one's bearing on the ice, the ability to beat the opponent to a cunning and unexpected decision—these are fundamental principles of tactics in modern ice hockey. It was exactly in this component of the game that our team had a decisive edge at Innsbruck.

"The team, I think, played a sufficiently even game, but I would, probably, single out Shadrin's trio, in which Victor Shali-

mov, a high-speed player, served as a dynamo for the entire team of the five players."

I would like to add to Valery's words that Kharlamov himself was the most effective player in the Soviet team.

It was Kharlamov who scored the last goal of the 12th White Games, the goal that brought victory—4-3.

Silver went to the Czechoslovak team and bronze—to the FRG.

The five victories at the Olympic Games brought Soviet ice hockey world fame. Victory under the colours with the five intertwined Olympic rings is greatly valued in the sporting world.

You have probably seen the word "ex-champion" in newspaper reports about sports competitions or in books written about sports stars. "Ex" means a former champion who yielded his title to a rival.

But there are champions who are out of this danger, even if they lose their next match, or fail to participate in new tournaments, games or competitions.

The prefix "ex" is never added to the title of Olympic champion. When in the subsequent Olympic Games four years

later victory goes to another athlete or team, the current winner will continue to hold the title of Olympic champion, the number of the Olympic Games at which he won will be added to his title.

The "space jumper" Valery Brumel has long hung up his track shoes but he is still an Olympic champion—the champion of the 18th Olympic Games held in Tokyo in 1964.

It is the same thing in ice hockey. Veterans leave the sport. Vsevolod Bobrov's generation was the first to go, then Veniamin Alexandrov, Boris Mayorov, Victor Konovalenko and their teammates. But they all remain Olympic champions. Bobrov—the champion of the 7th Winter Olympic Games, Alexandrov, Mayorov, Konovalenko—holders of the two Olympic gold medals—champions of the 9th and 10th Winter Olympic Games.

Fifty four Soviet hockey players are Olympic champions, while four of them are thrice Olympic champions (A. Ragulin, A. Firsov, V. Davydov, and V. Kuzkin).

World Championships Team Medallists

1920. Antwerp (Belgium). Canada, USA, Czechoslovakia.
1924. Chamonix (France). Canada, USA, England.
1928. Saint Maurice (Switzerland). Canada, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1930. Chamonix (France). Canada, Germany, Switzerland.
1931. Krynica (Poland). Canada, USA, Austria.
1932. Lake Placid (USA). Canada, USA, Germany.
1933. Prague (Czechoslovakia). USA. Canada, Czechoslovakia.
1934. Milan (Italy). Canada, USA, Germany.
1935. Davos (Switzerland). Canada, Czechoslovakia, England.
1936. Garmisch-Partenkirchen (Germany). England, Canada, USA.
1937. London (Britain). Canada, England, Switzerland.
1938. Prague (Czechoslovakia). Canada, England, Czechoslovakia.
1939. Basel-Zurich (Switzerland). Canada, USA, Switzerland.
- 1940-1946. No games were staged.
1947. Prague (Czechoslovakia). Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Austria.
1948. Saint Maurice (Switzerland). Canada, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland.
1949. Stockholm (Sweden). Czechoslovakia, Canada, USA.
1950. London (Britain). Canada, USA, Switzerland.
1951. Paris (France). Canada, Sweden, Switzerland.
1952. Oslo (Norway). Canada, USA, Sweden.
1953. Basel-Zurich (Switzerland). Sweden, FRG, Switzerland.
1954. Stockholm (Sweden). USSR, Canada, Sweden.
1955. Krefeld, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Dortmund (FRG). Canada, USSR, Czechoslovakia.
1956. Cortina d'Ampezzo (Italy). USSR, USA, Canada.
1957. Moscow (USSR). Sweden, USSR, Czechoslovakia.
1958. Oslo (Norway). Canada, USSR, Sweden.
1959. Prague (Czechoslovakia). Canada, USSR, Czechoslovakia.
1960. Squaw Valley (USA). USA, Canada, USSR.
1961. Geneva-Lausanne (Switzerland). Canada, Czechoslovakia, USSR.
1962. Colorado Springs (USA). Sweden, Canada, USA.
1963. Stockholm (Sweden). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1964. Innsbruck (Austria). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1965. Tampere (Finland). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1966. Ljubljana (Yugoslavia). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Canada.
1967. Vienna (Austria). USSR, Sweden, Canada.
1968. Grenoble (France). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Canada.
1969. Stockholm (Sweden). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1970. Stockholm (Sweden). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1971. Bern-Geneva (Switzerland). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1972. Prague (Czechoslovakia). Czechoslovakia, USSR, Sweden.
1973. Moscow (USSR). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1974. Helsinki (Finland). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1975. Munich-Düsseldorf (FRG). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1976. Katowice (Poland). Czechoslovakia, USSR, Sweden.
1977. Vienna (Austria). Czechoslovakia, Sweden, USSR.
1978. Prague (Czechoslovakia). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Canada.
1979. Moscow (USSR). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.

European Team Medallists

1910. Montreau (France). England, Belgium, Germany.
1911. Berlin (Germany). Czechoslovakia, Germany, Belgium.
1912. The results were annulled.
1913. Munich (Germany). Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Germany.
1914. Berlin (Germany). Czechoslovakia, Germany, Belgium.
- 1915-1920. No games were held.
1921. Stockholm (Sweden). Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Austria.
1922. Saint Maurice (Switzerland). Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Switzerland.
1923. Antwerp (Belgium). Sweden, France, Czechoslovakia.
1924. Milan (Italy). France, Sweden, Belgium-Switzerland.
1925. Strbské Pleso (Czechoslovakia). Czechoslovakia, Austria, Switzerland.

1926. Davos (Switzerland). Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Austria.
1927. Vienna (Austria). Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany.
1928. Saint Maurice (Switzerland). Sweden, Switzerland, England.
1929. Budapest (Hungary). Czechoslovakia, Poland, Austria.
1930. Berlin (Germany). Germany, Switzerland, Austria.
1931. Krynica (Poland). Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia.
1932. Berlin (Germany). Sweden, Austria, Switzerland.
1933. Prague (Czechoslovakia). Czechoslovakia, Austria, Switzerland-Germany.
1934. Milan (Italy). Germany, Switzerland, Hungary-Czechoslovakia.
1935. Davos (Switzerland). Switzerland, England, Czechoslovakia.
1936. Garmisch-Partenkirchen (Germany). England, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland-Germany.
1937. London (Britain). England, Switzerland, Germany.
1938. Prague (Czechoslovakia). England, Czechoslovakia, Germany.
1939. Basel-Zurich (Switzerland). Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Germany.
- 1940-1946. No games were staged.
1947. Prague (Czechoslovakia). Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Austria.
1948. Saint Maurice (Switzerland). Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Sweden.
1949. Stockholm (Sweden). Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Switzerland.
1950. London (Britain). Switzerland, England, Sweden.
1951. Paris (France). Sweden, Switzerland, Norway.
1952. Oslo (Norway). Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland.
1953. Basel-Zurich (Switzerland). Sweden, FRG, Switzerland.
1954. Stockholm (Sweden). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1955. Krefeld, Cologne, Düsseldorf, Dortmund (FRG). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1956. Cortina d'Ampezzo (Italy). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1957. Moscow (USSR). Sweden, USSR, Czechoslovakia.
1958. Oslo (Norway). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1959. Prague (Czechoslovakia). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1960. Squaw Valley (USA). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1961. Geneva-Lausanne (Switzerland). Czechoslovakia, USSR, Sweden.
1962. Colorado Springs (USA). Sweden, Finland, Norway.
1963. Stockholm (Sweden). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1964. Innsbruck (Austria). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1965. Tampere (Finland). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1966. Ljubljana (Yugoslavia). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1967. Vienna (Austria). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1968. Grenoble (France). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1969. Stockholm (Sweden). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1970. Stockholm (Sweden). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1971. Bern-Geneva (Switzerland). Czechoslovakia, USSR, Sweden.
1972. Prague (Czechoslovakia). Czechoslovakia, USSR, Sweden.
1973. Moscow (USSR). USSR, Sweden, Czechoslovakia.
1974. Helsinki (Finland). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1975. Munich-Düsseldorf (FRG). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1976. Katowice (Poland). Czechoslovakia, Sweden, USSR.
1977. Vienna (Austria). Czechoslovakia, Sweden, USSR.
1978. Prague (Czechoslovakia). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.
1979. Moscow (USSR). USSR, Czechoslovakia, Sweden.

Training

Skating

When skating, bend your knees slightly because this stance ensures good stability and enables you to push off energetically with any foot. Start and stop abruptly and turn quickly.

When skating across the ice, do not lift your feet and do not jump on the ice, but try to glide. Coordinate the movements of all parts of your body.

Do not skate with your body bend forward too far: although weight creates an impression of speed, it is deceptive. This manner of skating makes breathing difficult.

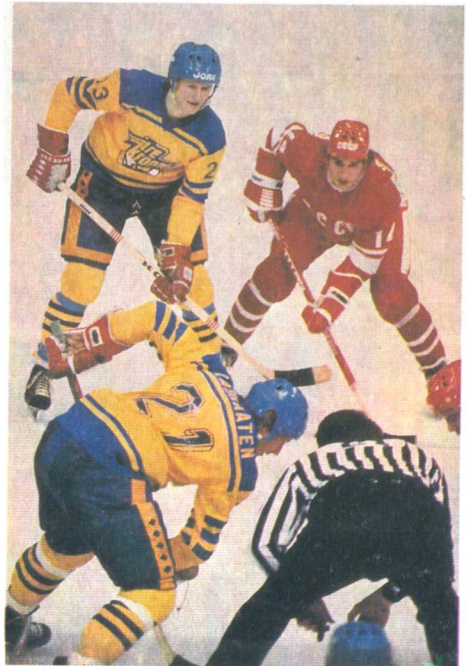
Another mistake is skating with your head lowered. Ice hockey abounds in tackling and body-checking, and if you skate without noticing what is happening around you, you may easily become a sitting duck. A player like that can be easily tackled and knocked off his feet. Moreover, when a player skates with head lowered, he loses sight of his partners.

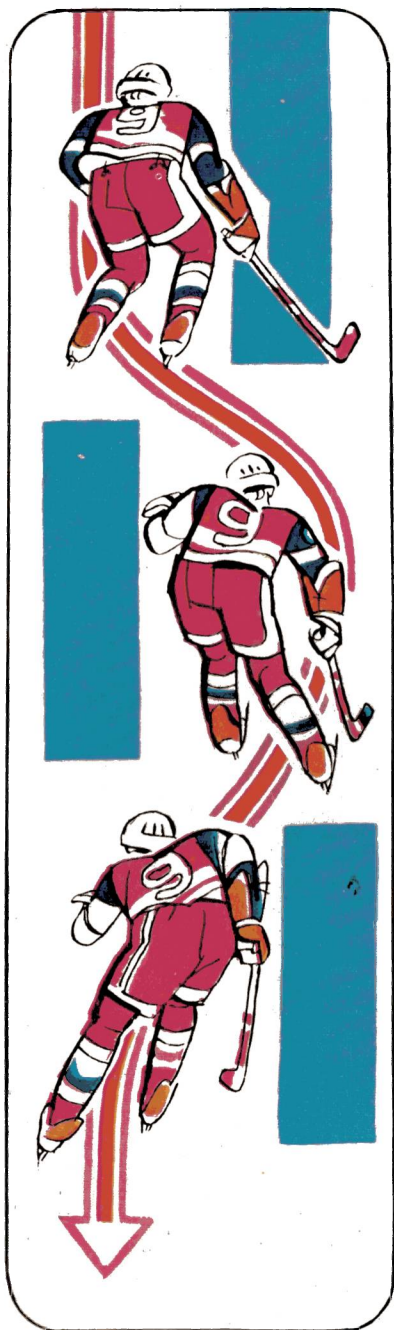
Learn to skate without looking at the puck, to run with sharp turns, lunging aside, forward, backwards and change step.

Lunge. To dash is a very valuable asset of any player. One can master quick starts through intensive training, but one has also to learn to break with both feet. Feet are kept close to each other. Learn to break with the front edge of the skate: this will give you an opportunity to resume skating. When you want to stop abruptly, to break, shift your load to the toe.

At the start, take a position similar to that of a sprinter—slightly bent forward. The stronger you push, the higher your opening speed will be. Start running with powerful steps-push-offs, then gradually start gliding, each time fully straightening the foot you pushed-off with.

Skating backwards. When playing against fast players, you must be able to skate quickly backwards (especially if you are a defenceman), since when changing to defence, very little time is left to turn round and dash for your defence





zone. Moreover, retreating with your back forward, you do not lose sight of your rivals and easily accommodate developments.

If you master these skating methods well you'll be reliably "armed" to tackle the puck.

Skating backwards, bend your knees more than usual, crouch deeper and make your steps smaller. It's easier to coordinate your movements. Having pushed-off from the ice with one skate, shift the weight of your body to another foot, which is being bent as you push-off. Then push-off with the other skate. After pushing-off, do not take the skate's edge off the ice, otherwise you may lose your balance.

How to Hold a Stick

Hold the stick the way it is most convenient for you. Usually (but not obligatory) the player whose right hand is stronger takes the stick in this hand by its very end, while holding it with his left hand somewhat below. Why is it better to hold the stick in this way and not vice versa? The thing is that during the game (for instance, when you dribble the puck or take it away from an opponent) you will have to hold the stick with one hand. Naturally, it will be more convenient for you to hold it in the hand which is more strong. Nevertheless, it is up to you to decide.

When dribbling the puck, the width of the grip can be changed. As you master the technique, you will learn to change the position of your "lower" hand.



Change of the hold width and the correct placing of blade on ice

When dribbling the puck and by-passing, keep your hands close to each other. When passing the puck to a partner, increase the distance between your hands. When making a powerful shot or a slap, widen your grip to the utmost.

The same recommendations apply to the players taking part in the face-off.

Dribbling

During the game the player frequently finds himself in a situation of a "relative solitude", when his partners are all marked and he is in the most favourable posi-

tion for attacking the goal or is closer to the goal than any one of his teammates. That's when he has a chance to resort to individual action.

It is not enough to merely dribble the puck. You have to dribble it with a great speed, executing sharp turns, making abrupt stops and by-passing an opponent. Because dribbling will be followed by your next move: passing the puck to your partner, shooting for goal, or by-passing it is essential to learn to control the puck and at the same time see what is happening on the rink.

The Soviet aces make use of two main methods of dribbling: **smooth dribbling** and **dribbling by slapping the puck lightly**

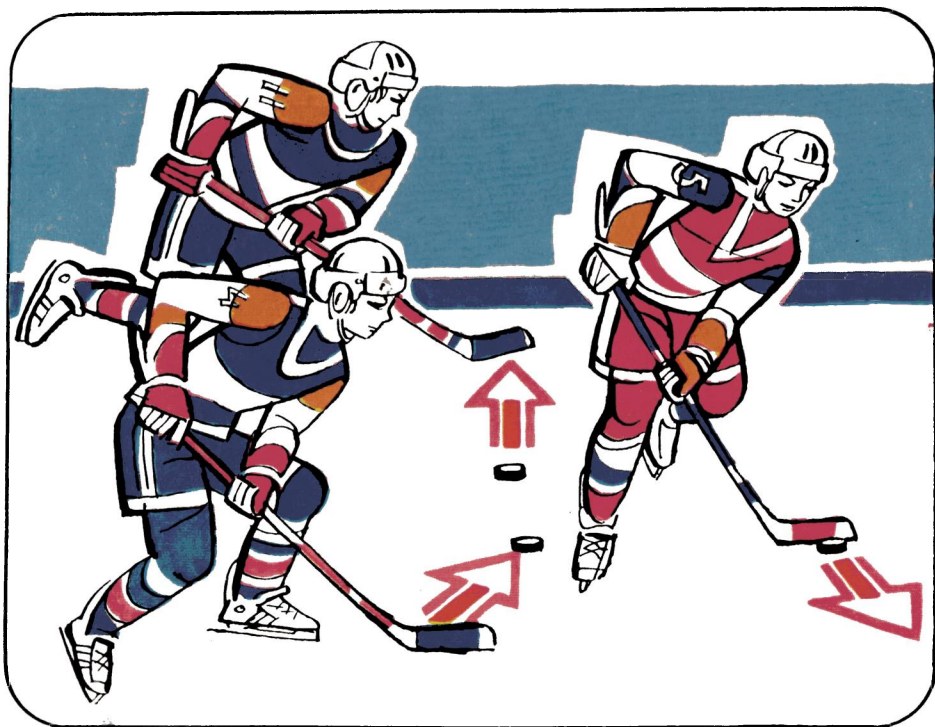
from right to left with the stick's blade, the so-called method of "puck-chopping".

When dribbling the puck smoothly, the player touches now with the left now with the right side of the hook, imparting it the right direction of gliding. All the movements of the player must be light and unconstrained. Bend your trunk slightly forward, grip the stick firmly with one hand and lightly with another. Cover the puck with the hook keeping it in the middle of the blade or closer to the bend. This position of the puck is convenient for a subsequent shot and it is more difficult for the rival to take the puck from you.

When dribbling the puck, look forward so as to see the situation ahead.

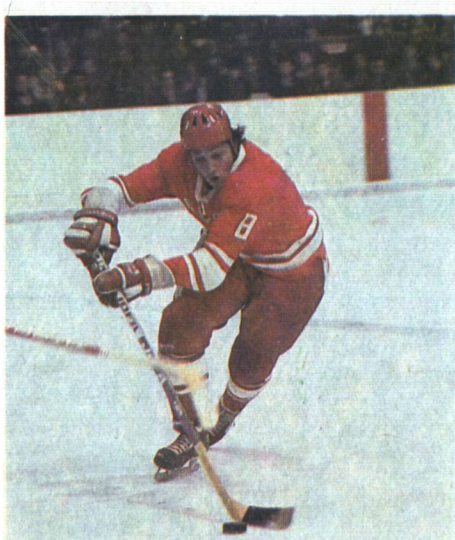
As distinct from smooth dribbling of the puck, when the player makes broad and calm movements, in "chopping" movements are short and sharp. Keep the stick firmly in both hands pushing the puck right and left with the side of the blade, directing to the side and forward. Make a series of slaps and take the blade over the puck in order to control its movement in the right direction. At the moment of pushing the puck, press the blade against the ice with its lower edge, otherwise you may miss: the puck will slide under the blade. Other actions are the same as when dribbling smoothly.

Dribbling the puck striking it lightly with the blade from right and left

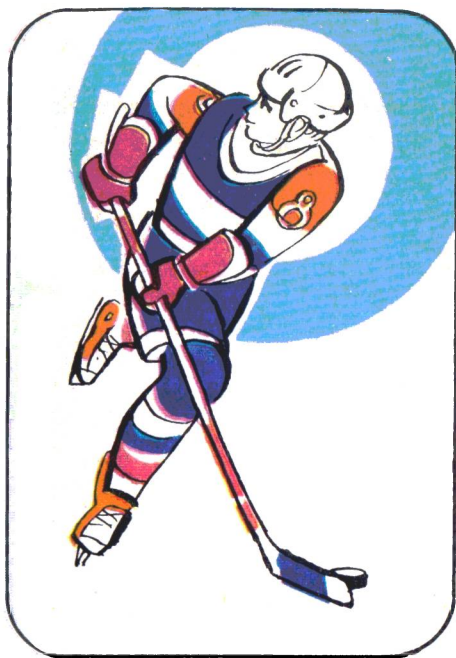


The puck may also be dribbled with the skate. In this case it is knocked against the stick or the other skate. Shift the weight of your body to the gliding foot, while lifting the other one and somewhat turning it with the toe outward. Push the puck toward with the stick's blade with a short movement of the inner side of the skate. After that, immediately lower the foot to the ice.

If you want to send the puck to your other skate, give it a light push. After that place the pushing foot on the ice in front of the foot on which you glide, so as to continue skating forward. Having pushed off with your gliding foot, turn the toe outward in order to give the puck another push.



S. Kapustin

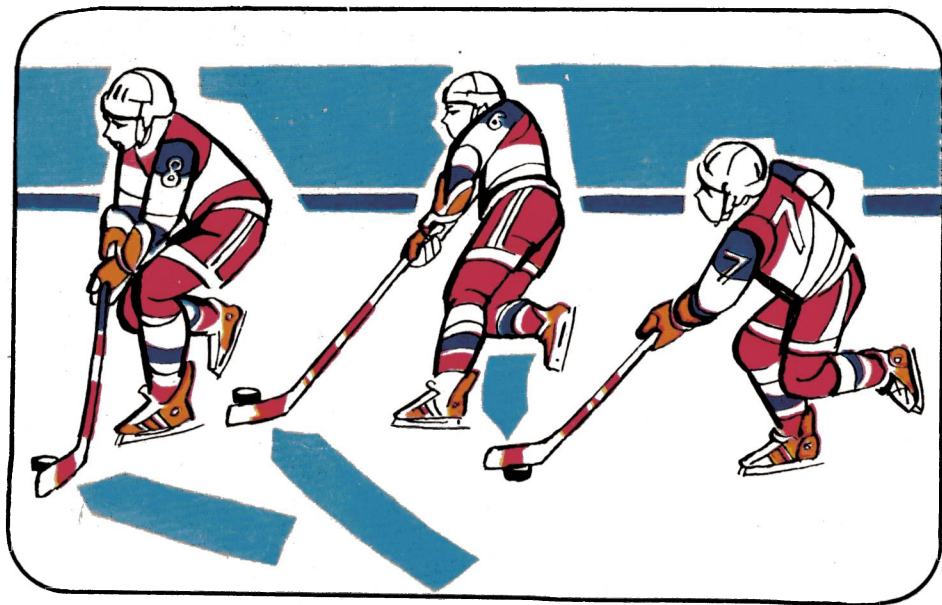


Don't look at the puck

Each player should master puck dribbling methods. Therefore, at training sessions try to execute intricate stick movements keeping the puck close at the blade. While dribbling, imitate by-passing methods, thinking up new feints.

So, here are the main rules of puck dribbling once more.

1. Dribble the puck with the blade's centre.
2. Learn to dribble the puck without keeping an eye on it. Don't look at it!
3. Learn to by-pass your opponent on the right and on the left. Learn to execute feints and by-passing on the right and left, then you can always take up good positions in front of the opponent's goal.
4. Don't stop before making a feint. Your feet must keep moving. This will enable you to skate easily to the right or left or change the direction of skating to any side.



Carry the puck with the middle of the blade

Shooting at the Goal

When learning to shoot at the goal, see to it that your shots are accurate, unexpected and powerful. Defencemen must have an especially powerful shot, since they have to shoot at the goal from more distant position, but the forwards could also do with powerful shots.

It is common knowledge that only those who have strong hands and powerful shoulders can shoot a puck strongly.

Of course, such players have greater opportunities for making powerful and quick movements with the stick. However, it is high technique that is decisive in the art of shooting which enables the player to execute this or that method without fuss and hurrying, without ex-

pending unnecessary strength, economically and accurately.

Alexander Almetov, the famous Soviet forward of the '60s, five-times world champion, was average in physique. However, he was a wizard at shooting from the right with the puck flying at the goal like a cannon ball and striking the goal at the least protected spots. That is why he was known as one of the best forwards in the Soviet ice hockey.

Nevertheless, I must warn beginners against paying too much attention to powerful shots when they begin learning to shoot at the goal. A beginner, trying to send strongly, very often disregards such elements as accuracy and unexpectedness of the shot. That is why he must, first of all, learn to be technically correct, unhurried, to shoot not too strongly, but with

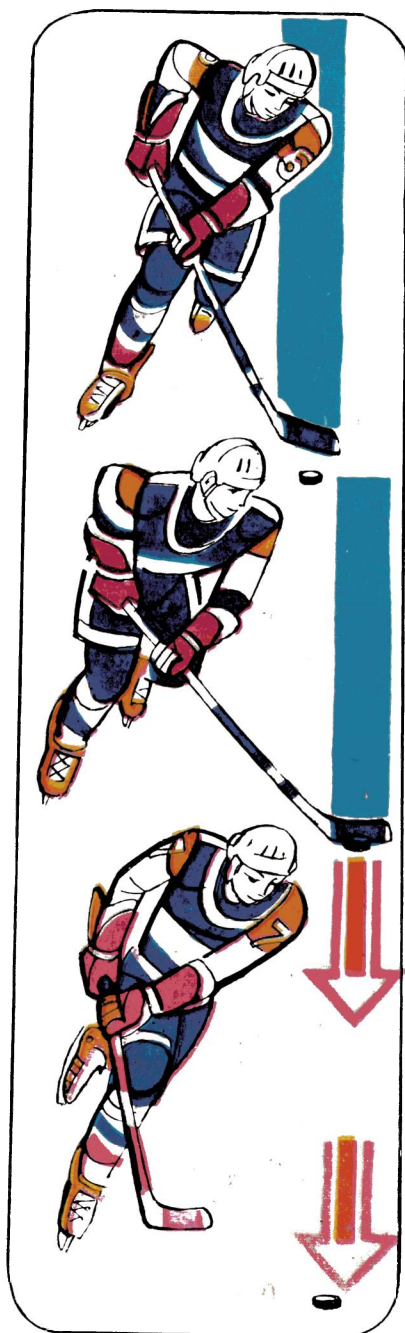
sufficient accuracy. Then he must try to learn shooting after short preparation—immediately after stopping, during dribbling, by-passing, tackling, while skating or from an inconvenient position. Then gradually learn to put all your might into the swing at the final phase of the shot. Do not forget, however, about accuracy and suddenness of execution.

Every player must learn to shoot from any position.

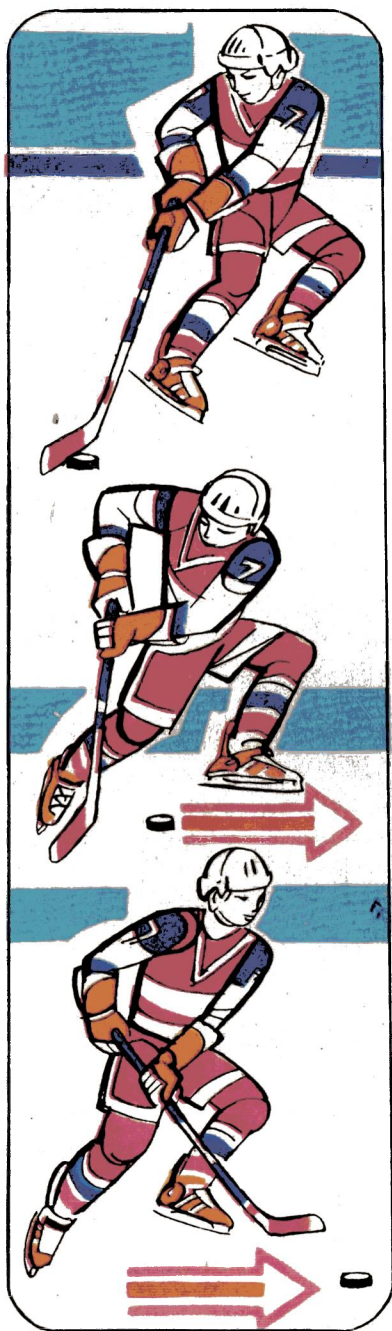
At training sessions keep to a sequence in learning how to shoot: after mastering simple methods, pass on to more intricate ones. For instance, if a young player has learned to shoot with skating not very fast, then he must try to shoot at a greater speed. Then try and shoot accurately from other positions, with the puck being at your foot or far ahead. Learn to shoot accurately after a short stop, while skating and even when you are being blocked from shooting.

There are several methods of shooting, from your “convenient” hand or from the “inconvenient” one, toss-up shooting, smooth shooting, with a twist of the hook, etc.

A beginner will hardly become a highly-skilled player if during training sessions he is shy to execute elements and methods he finds difficult. Regrettably, this is often the case: the coach allows time for self-training, while the player executes only those exercises and elements which he has already mastered. In the final analysis, the player fails to add new elements to his technical skill. He must, first of all, perfect those elements



Shooting from the “convenient” hand



which he finds difficult. Only in this way will he be able to eliminate his shortcomings.

Shooting with your "convenient" hand*

Stand with your side to the goal. Place the stick on the ice with its lower edge at an acute angle to the puck. The puck is at the side, slightly forward ahead of the player. It appears as if covered with the blade.

Making a powerful swinging movement, move the stick as if towards oneself so as to impart the puck a spinning movement at the beginning of the throw. Then as if "opening" the puck supplement this movement with a sharp twist of the blade toward the goal. To make the shot more powerful, some of the players use the natural bend of the stick which develops as a result of the quick movement of the stick and its pressure against the ice. Springing from the ice, the stick straightens out, imparts additional velocity to the puck.

Correctly executed, the blade with the puck somewhat lag behind the movement of the hands. It moves with maximum sharpness at the final stage of the shot when great initial velocity is imparted to the puck. The weight of the body at the moment of shooting is shifted to the forward gliding foot. This enables the player to put more power into the shot and to retain balance. Hold the stick firmly with your right hand, bringing your left shoulder

* Shooting technique in this book presupposes that most of the players hold the end of the stick with their right hand.

Shooting from the "inconvenient" hand

der back with the swing. Hold the stick with your other hand at first lightly so that the blade touches the puck softly and the movement itself is smooth, then intensify the grip with this hand. Your hand moves forward together with the body. The final moment of the shot is important, when you turn the stick sharply towards the goal with both hands.

When making a shot, concentrate on the puck. Controlling it, shift your glance to the spot you are intending to send the puck to.

Shooting with your “inconvenient” hand. Stand with your left side to the goal and place the stick onto the ice next to the puck. In this position your right hand must be bent at the elbow and brought slightly back. Grip the stick in the middle with your left hand. Keep it practically straight at the beginning of the movement. In the process of shooting bring it to the body bending it in the elbow. Shoot with a short and energetic movement of the stick forward and slightly to yourself. To increase the force of the shot, turn the body and the stick towards the target. For better balance place your feet slightly wider than your shoulders and shift the weight of the body sharply to the forward foot, which at the moment of shooting is gliding in the direction of the puck’s flight. It is a rather complicated method, because it does not allow you to make a full use of the swinging movement. Therefore, you must summon all your persistence while learning it.

The **slap**, or striking shot, has appeared in hockey relatively recently. Bring the



Slap shot



stick back and then sharply hit the puck slightly touching the ice with your stick before the strike. The blade ricochets from the ice and is imparted additional acceleration. As a result, the shot becomes more powerful and the puck flies with a greater speed.

Wrist shot. As seen from the name, it is executed mainly with a sharp movement of the wrist (turning the wrist joint). Such shots are a nuisance for the goalies, because it is impossible to determine the direction of the puck's flight beforehand. As distinct from conventional shots, wrist shots are made without a swing, at the most unexpected moment, when the goalie does not expect it. If you master the wrist shot well, you will be a formidable threat to goalies.

Concealed shooting. Imagine that you have outplayed the opponent and grabbed the puck in his zone. Now you have to shoot at the goal powerfully and accurately. But sometimes these two qualities are not enough to score.

The secret of a shot today is much more complicated. You must learn to make a concealed shot. In other words, to conceal your preparation for the shot and attack the goal unexpectedly.

Anatoly Firsov, Merited Master of Sports, many-times world, European and thrice Olympic champion, shares his secrets.

It is difficult to get to the goal, but it is even more difficult to score. There are probably some young players among you who think that it is enough to take the stick into your hands, make a wide swing, hit the puck and there you

Concealed shot

are, the puck is in the net. I thought the same when I was a youngster, until I met real masters.

I must say at the outset that without persistent and systematic training there can be no high-class player, more so a sharp-shooter. Even learning to hold the stick properly requires much effort.

Don't be shy to take the ice even if nature failed to endow you with iron muscles and a powerful build. Don't be shy if your comrades are more impressive. At first your agility will replace strength, and your persistence during training sessions will bring you success.

When he takes the stick in his hands for the first time, the young player very often tries to shoot the puck as high as he can, thinking that it is best. He's wrong. An unexpected low shot is very dangerous for the goalie.

Don't strike the stick against the ice. Let the blade glide slightly across the ice and then you will impart all your force into the shot.

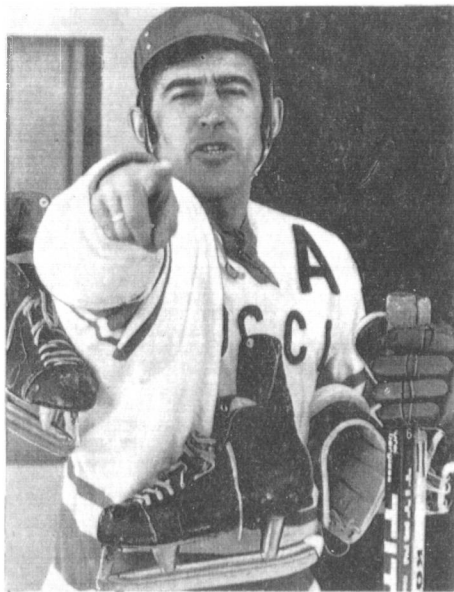
From my own experience I know that no explanations will replace practice. Theory is not enough to perfect your slap shot. Take top hockey players. They know all the intricacies of the slap shot but even the aces at times break their sticks executing slaps. Training to exhaustion is the only way to master an accurate and clean slap shot.

I spoke about the slap shot, now a few words about the concealed shot.

I slightly turn the stick away from myself with my left wrist, my left hand holding the stick at its top end, so that the blade's heel protrudes forward. At the same moment I push the stick energetically and sharply towards the target with my right hand. The stick bends elastically, its blade gathering the puck sending it towards the target as if from the catapult.

I'll let you in on my main secret: shoot at the goal at the moment when the goalie does not see the blade of your stick. If he misses the beginning of your shot, all that remains for him is to pick the puck out of his net.

Even if an element is executed flawlessly (if you play against a strong opponent) you will gain no advantage by it. The opponent is aware of your intentions and prepares to counter them in order to check your next step. It is quite different when you manage to catch your opponent unawares: your shot becomes much more dangerous.



A. Firsov

The main rules of shooting:

1. Hold the stick as firm as possible. To make your shot more powerful, shoot from behind the body (from the side). In this way you can put your weight behind the shot.
2. The height of the shot is determined by the position of the blade. If the puck is to be sent low, the blade must "cover" the puck. The less you cover it, the higher it will fly. If possible shoot as low as you can: such shots are most dangerous for the goalie.
3. Look before shooting.
4. If you make an upper shot, aim at the goalie's stick, because it is harder for him to bring into action his hand in which he keeps the stick. Pucks flying high above the ice are often hard for short goalies to get.

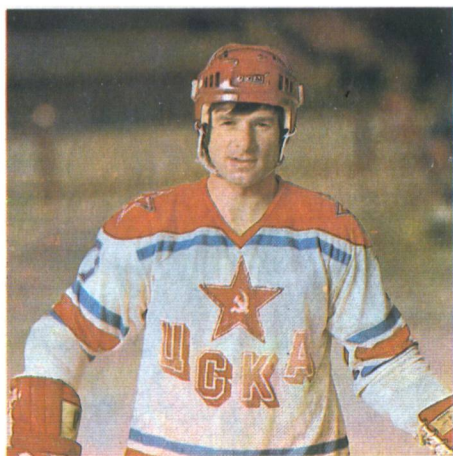
5. The best distance for shooting at the goal is 4,5-6 metres.

6. If you have one or two defencemen in front of you, shoot at the goal from below them. The goalie may be covered with his own defencemen.

7. Do not shoot if your partner is in a better position than you and has better chance to score. Do not fuss if two or three of you face a single opponent, but avoid making superfluous passes.

Valery Kharlamov, Merited Master of Sports, many-times world, European and twice Olympic champion, shares his secrets.

I think that the wrist shot gives the most results. It is particularly crafty because it is made without preliminary preparations, i. e. off-hand, and the goalie very often has no time to react. You can make the wrist shot at any moment even when surrounded on all sides by rivals. For instance, when tackling an opponent with the goalie watching you, you can instantaneously shoot at the goal from under the opponent's skate.



V. Kharlamov

The effectiveness of your shots can be enhanced only by constant training. I wish millions of ice hockey fans were able to see Vladimir Vikulov, who can make wrist shots better than anyone else, shoot at the goal during training sessions. You can hardly tear him away from this exercise. That's why his final shot is so accurate, unexpected and effective. And that's why Vikulov in the past few years has always been the one of the top-notch scorers of Soviet hockey.

I would like to lay emphasis on the shot when a player chances to be alone with the goalie. This encounter has certain intricacies. I think, the forward should approach the goal dribbling the puck at the side rather than in front of him. In this position he is always ready to shoot at the goal. Keep the goalie on tenterhooks. Let him freeze in the goal and decide at the last moment, whether to shoot the puck or by-pass the goalie. If you decide to shoot at the goal, attack with a feint. Bend your body forward to the side, show with the stick's end one direction and at the last instance turn the blade and send the puck at the opposite corner of the goal.

There's yet another intricacy in the final shot. When the forwards have broken away from other opponents, the goalie keeps manoeuvring in the goal. You must keep a close eye on him and watch his movements. If you manage to shoot in the direction opposite to his movement, you are sure to score. Boris Mikhailov of the Central Army Club team and of the national squad is a past master in such situations. He watches with what skate the goalie pushes off and shoots next to the foot he is resting on. The goalie is not in a position to repulse the puck with his support foot.

Passing the Puck

For short distances the puck is passed using the so called smooth shot. Hold the stick loosely, moving it with both hands towards the target. Do not bring the blade sharply off the ice in the final phase as you would during the usual shot, but move it as if follow up the puck. It flies less energetically in this pass. This is a very simple method. The player imparts to the puck a needed direction simultaneously with both hands achieving a high accuracy.



To send the puck more forcefully, shoot it from behind the trunk (from the side)

One can pass the puck across the ice with a sharp turn of the blade. In this case the puck must be closer to the blade and covered by it.

The stick is turned sharply on its "heel" forward of oneself striking the puck lightly. The pass is made practically with one's wrists. Such passes can be quite unexpected for the opponent.

Use the toss-up pass where the adversary can intercept the puck with his stick. To lift the puck off the ice and toss it up, impart a twist to it, so the puck slides along the blade. At the end, the blade hooks the puck and lifts it off the ice. However, do not toss it up higher than 30-35 cm. Such a pass is particularly accurate.



When passing, the blade "follows up" the puck

In drop pass, you stop the puck for your partner following you. If you do not stop the puck but simply pass it back it may overshoot him.

As distinct from drop pass, back passing's is used when sending the puck over a great distance (for instance, from the face board to the blue line). When passing back, make sure of the exact position of your partner, otherwise you may pass the puck to your opponent or take it out of the zone you occupy.

Passing the puck by hitting is less accurate. However, such through-passing in front of the enemy's goal creates a threat.

In any passing, beginners must remember the following:

1. Make a pass not onto the skates but onto the blade. It is easier to receive such a pass.

Be aware of the individualities of your partners and their habits. Pass the puck so that your partner receives it with his "convenient" hand.

2. Do not pass the puck to the player who is checked.

3. The player who is receiving or awaiting the puck keeps the blade flat on the ice!

Gordie Howe, an outstanding Canadian ice hockey player, shares his secrets.

The secret of an accurate pass is very simple: keep the upper hand on the stick without holding it close to the body, otherwise the puck will move along an arch and never get to your partner.

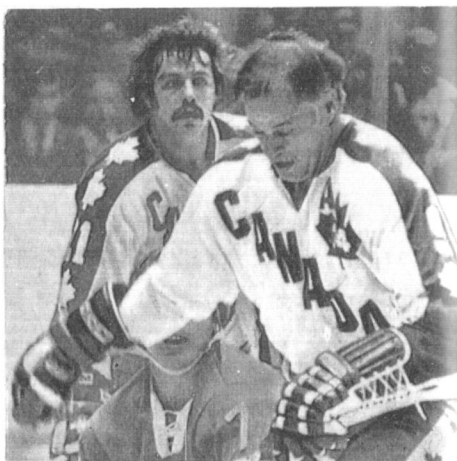
Never lower your head, because, firstly, it is easy to guess your intention (if you stare at the puck) and secondly, you'll become an easy prey for a defenceman who won't find it difficult to body-check you. Do not send a pass which you wouldn't want to receive. It should be reasonably fast, sliding (except those cases when you have to put the puck on the partner's raised stick) and ahead of your partner (with an allowance for his speed). Do not allow the puck to roll or go topsy-turvy across the ice...

What's more. Play so that you, your partners and the fans get pleasure from your play...

Stopping the Puck

Stop the sliding or flying puck with the stick, skate or your hand. Often the puck is stopped with the body.

To stop the puck sliding across the ice with the blade of your stick, hold the stick somewhat loosely with the blade placed with its lower surface on the ice in the path of the puck. The moment it touches the blade, bring the stick backwards.



G. Howe

softening the blow. When stopping the puck, at first look at it and then, after quickly appraising the situation, locate your partner.

If the puck flies with a great speed, soften the blow as much as possible. Here it is important to catch the moment the puck contacts the blade. The stick is quickly brought back or to the side in order to absorb the blow.

Keep the stick firmly in your hands when stopping a flying puck. Keep the blade slightly towards the puck at the level of its flight. The instant the puck touches the blade, straighten the hand holding the stick and turn it inside towards the ice. The blade, as if covering the puck, is dropped to the ice.

An experienced player stops the sliding puck with the stick, as well as with the skate. Turn the skate with its inside so as to be able to receive the puck. To soften the blow against the skate, raise the foot somewhat and turn your toe outside.

To avoid the puck getting to an opponent during the stopping, immediately push it with the skate to your stick or pass it to your partner. To impart the puck the necessary rebound, stiffen the foot with which you stop it or make a slight movement to meet it at the moment it touches the skate. The skate turned at this or that angle to the line of flight of the puck imparts it the necessary direction.

The flying puck can be stopped with the palm of your free hand. Lower the palm toward the ice and press your fingers together. After striking your palm, the puck falls to the ice, where you can retrieve it. However, do not catch the puck—it is against the rules.

If the puck flies above your waist, it would be more appropriate to stop it with your palm the fingers of which are turned upwards.



By-Passing

As soon as the young player learns to tame the puck, he must begin learning feints.

There are feints and feints. The feints of one player differ from those of another. A high-class forward, seemingly, passes the puck to his rival, but as soon as he tries to get it away from him, it disappears.

The idea of these feints is to make the adversary believe in this or that manoeuvre, to entice him to make a lunge in a false direction and then, making use of it, by-pass him. Feints can be made with the stick and with the body.



Passing by leaving the puck behind you



Passing by bouncing or scooping the puck

Each player must know the basics of by-passing.

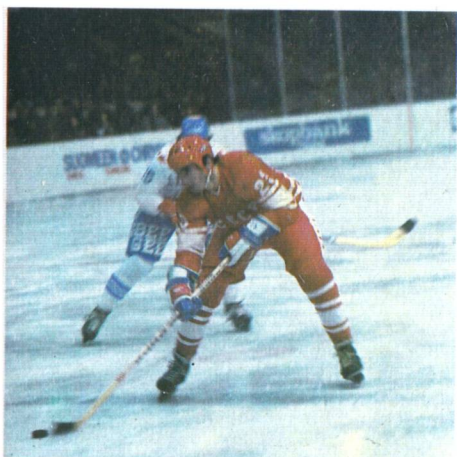
The secret of a successful feint lies in its unexpectedness, timeliness and whether it is convincing or not. It is also important to pick up high speed after executing it.

Assume, the player in the immediate vicinity of the opponent thinks of by-passing him. Controlling the puck reliably with his stick he feints—by nodding his head to the side or by leaning his body to the side. The opponent will naturally react to this movement and will try to counter the player so as to take the puck away from him. The player with the puck must quickly change the direction of skating and escape his challenger.

Feints with a side step. In the usual case the player makes a movement with his body in one direction (the opponent reacts to this movement) while he himself moves in another direction.

There are many variants of this method. For example, the player makes a feint to the left, then back again and finally moves to the left. Feint in advance, so that the opponent has the time to react to your reverse movement, deciding that you will skate in that direction.

Approach your opponent as close as possible, then at the last moment feint to the side. It is regarded that it is best of all to feint at a maximum speed. However, practice shows that feints



V. Golikov

while inertia gliding are also very effective.

Feints bending your trunk are effective when there is very little space for manoeuvring. When about a metre and a half is left to your adversary, bend your trunk to the side and lunge in the opposite direction.

Most feints begin with a head movement. Even a slightest nod can detract the opponent and make him take a wrong decision, thus facilitating the actions of the player with the puck.

Moving your shoulders. Instead of bending to the side, sometimes it is enough for the player to move his shoulders as if he intends to move in that direction. Then with a sharp movement he turns to the opposite side and skates in the opposite direction.

Feints with your stick. The player before tackling makes a feint with the stick as if trying to pass the puck, or change the direction. An opponent

usually reacts and the player takes an advantage of it.

A simple feint with the skate can also be quite successful. Make a lunge to the right. See if the rival reacted to it and if he did, quickly change the direction of skating and zoom past him.

Cross skating executed with lunges is also of interest. A rival may fall for it, while the player with the puck will take an advantage, change the direction of his skating and outplay the rival.

False passes are especially effective when you have a partner skating at your side. Approaching an opponent within one and a half or two metres, the player turns his head as if preparing to pass the puck to his partner, and simultaneously begins passing. However, after sending the puck to the side, he stops it and transfers to the other side, by-passing the opponent.

You can outplay an opponent by **changing the skating pace**. For this purpose the player approaches his opponent at a slow speed (three quarters of the maximum), then coming close to him, steps into high gear. By this time, the opponent has already calculated his actions in accordance with the initial speed of the attacking player and the unexpected lunge of the latter catches him unawares.

Slipping the puck through is a method when the player with the puck sends it between the rival's feet, by-passes him quickly and then, retrieving the puck, continues on his way.

When outplaying the opponent, you can make use of the board. Approach your opponent, at the instance he is ready to attack you, send the puck against the board at an acute angle, feint, by-pass



him and recover the puck behind his back. The angle and the force of your shot will depend on the rink where the game takes place. Several test shots will suggest to the player a correct decision.

A feint and a **deceptive shot** is extremely effective. At first all the movements are executed as in a real shot. The player takes up an initial position for the shot and imitates sending the puck forward. The secret lies in the movement of the stick: it brings the puck forward in a position from which the shot is usually made. At this point the stick is quickly lifted off the ice and brought forward to stop the puck. Then the player shifts it aside and begins a by-passing movement. Learn to execute this shot from the right as well as from the left hand. This will enable you to outplay your rivals at any spot on the ice.

Receiving the puck, stopping and accelerating is especially effective when the opponent is cutting across at you, trying to pin you against the boards. Accelerate, as if you are trying to outspeed your opponent. As soon as the distance enables your opponent to attack you, break sharply and continue to skate, slightly cutting the corner to the inner side, towards the middle of the rink.

More intricate feints are executed simultaneously with the stick and the body, with the stick and the skates, with the body and the skates. The intricacy of the tricks and the surprise movements of the player very often catch the opponent



Stopping the puck with the stick

Stopping the puck with the hand

unawares. He finds it hard to fathom quickly the real intentions of the puck-carrier.

For your feints to be more effective, learn to accelerate suddenly, to “explode”, as players say. Make a lunge the instance your opponent is caught by your feint.

A situation very often develops in the course of the game when the forward, having received the puck in the neutral zone, picks up **maximum speed** and boldly skates towards the enemy goal, although he has to by-pass, say, two defencemen on the way, who attentively follow his movements.

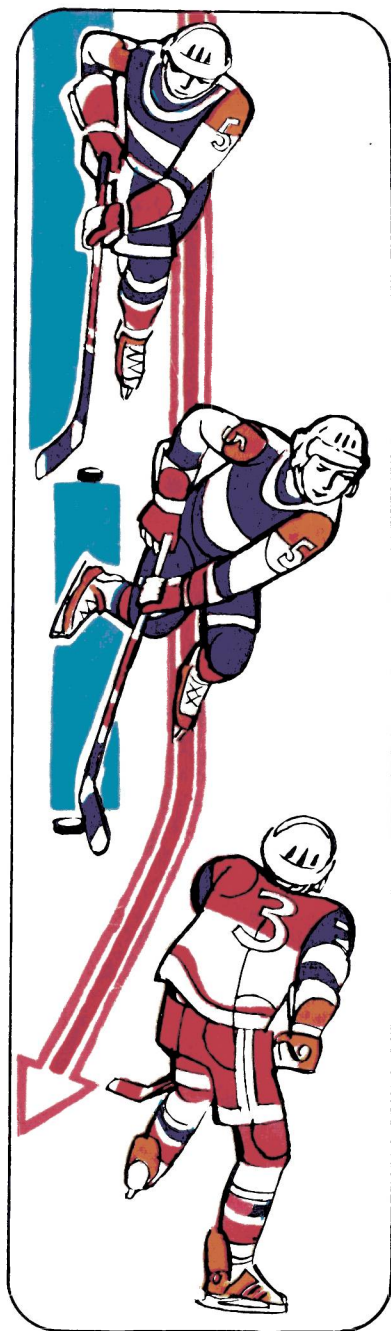
A more experienced player, having found himself in this situation (if no rival can overtake him), at first slows down somewhat and only on approaching close to the defencemen does he make a spurt.

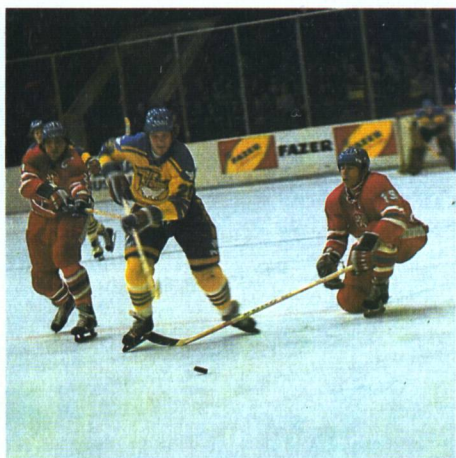
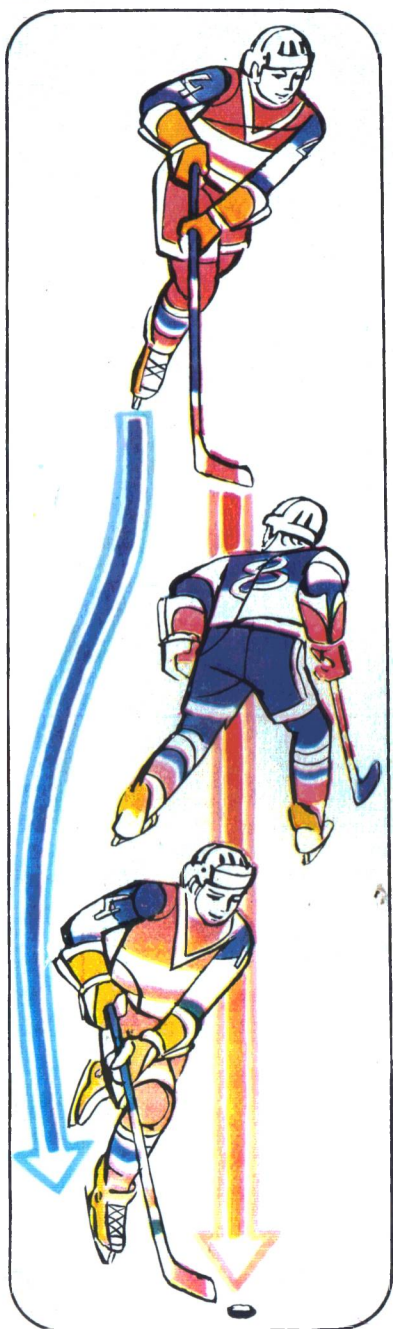
Before he accelerates, defencemen are unaware as to his actions: whether he will shoot or wait for his partners. Therefore, his spurt will catch them unawares.

Old hands advise young players: do not pass the puck to the side you are looking at. If your intentions are concealed, it will allow you to mount an acute attack and to create additional troubles for the opponents who are intent on getting the puck away from you.

Young players can learn how to conceal their actions from the top-notch players watching, for instance, how they pass the puck to their partners.

The player takes a swing as if preparing to shoot at the goal. His rival reacts to the swing—the aim is achieved: instead of shooting at the goal he makes a swift pass





to his partner. Now the player has a more advantageous position for attack but he will never show that he will shoot at the goal. In a fraction of a second he will “demonstrate” that he intends to by-pass his opponent, or make a pass, but actually will find the moment and accurately send the puck past the goalie who is unaware of this decision.

Snatching the Puck

Anything can happen during the game. Sometimes opponents err and send the puck to your stick, but such instances are rare during matches of crack teams.

An opponent will never yield the puck by himself. You have to take it away from him.

Young forwards erroneously think that it is the defencemen's lot to snatch the

Letting the puck through under your feet



Feint shot

puck from the opponent, and that the main thing for them is to score.

This is of course wrong. All five players in the course of the game may have the puck and attack the enemy's goal. Therefore, the same number of players are required to make your defence reliable—five defending players.

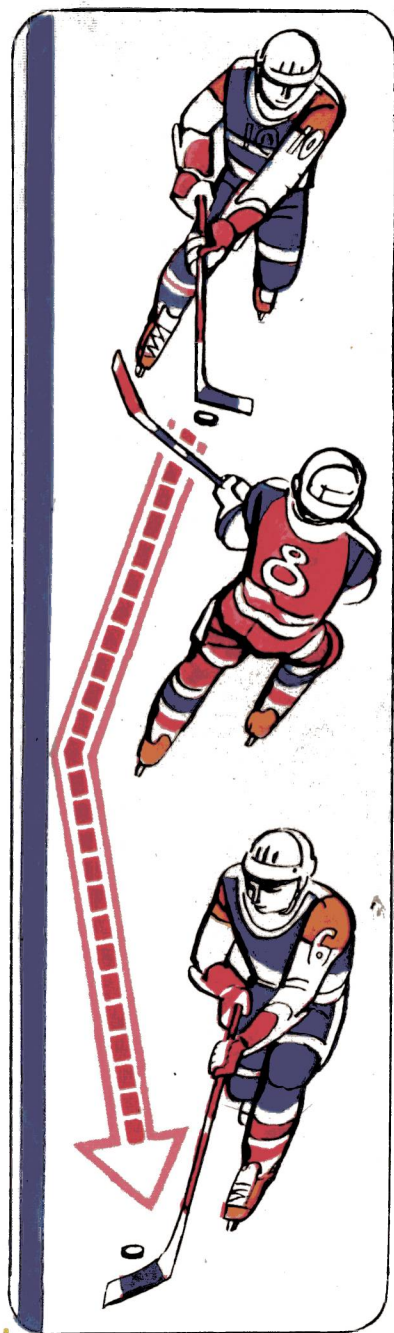
Moreover, very often the team remains shorthanded and there are moments during the game when at this or that section of the ice one defenceman is countered by two or even three opposite forwards. The ability to take puck away from the rival at such moments is decisive.

There are many ways of seizing the puck from your opponent: take it, or poke it away with the stick, or use a body-push.

To take the puck away, approach the opponent and try to lift his stick off the ice by knocking the power part of his stick from below.

You may use another method: press the opponent's stick down and hold it. The puck will part for an instance with the opponent's blade and you may be able quickly to retrieve it.

In difficult situations when grappling for the puck at the boards, it is expedient to pin the puck against the board, holding



on to the boards with both your hands for purchase.

All these methods will be effective only if the player keeps a close eye on the actions of his opponent. Do not pay attention to his distracting move and do not slow down.

When trying to take the puck away with the stick, it is of great importance to know how to approach your adversary. Experienced players think that by skating close to him in one direction it is quite easy to deprive him of the puck. In such a situation, defenceman can easily tackle an opponent directly and try again to snatch the puck if his first attempt failed.

It is advisable for the player who is a good skater to station himself somewhat behind his opponent: then he can try for the puck unexpectedly and, therefore, more effectively.

At times it is hard to snatch the puck away from your opponent with your stick alone. In tackling him, boldly collide, use body-tackling to seize the puck.

Body-checking is a very important hockey component. To body-check is to use strength in tackling your opponent technically correctly. Usually, defencemen body-check the opponent with their chest, shoulder-push (with one's arm closely pressed against the body) and hip-check.

The puck naturally flies faster than any player skates. Therefore, do not try to seize the puck if you have an opportunity to check the player who dribbles it. If he is checked, he at least will not be able to take other actions.

Use boards to by-pass the opponent

You have to train yourself for body-checking. Beside the knack of using your body properly, it is important to have a versatile physical ability and to have will-power.

However, you can use all methods only against a puck-carrier.

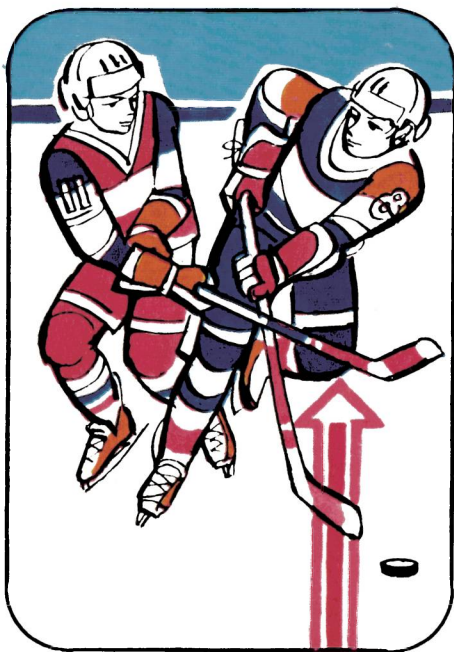
Before beginning to master these methods, learn to skate well backwards: then you will have no difficulty in approaching your opponent.

Before using a shove, attempt to poke the puck away from your opponent with the stick. This usually makes him hasten and pay more attention to the puck and, therefore, he is liable to lose his bearing on the ice.

It is very important to body-check at the right moment. Never be the first to reveal your intentions. On the contrary, provoke your opponent by a feint or make some other manoeuvre and then attack him decisively. The moments when your opponent is keen on by-passing and looks down on the puck, are the most appropriate for body-checking.

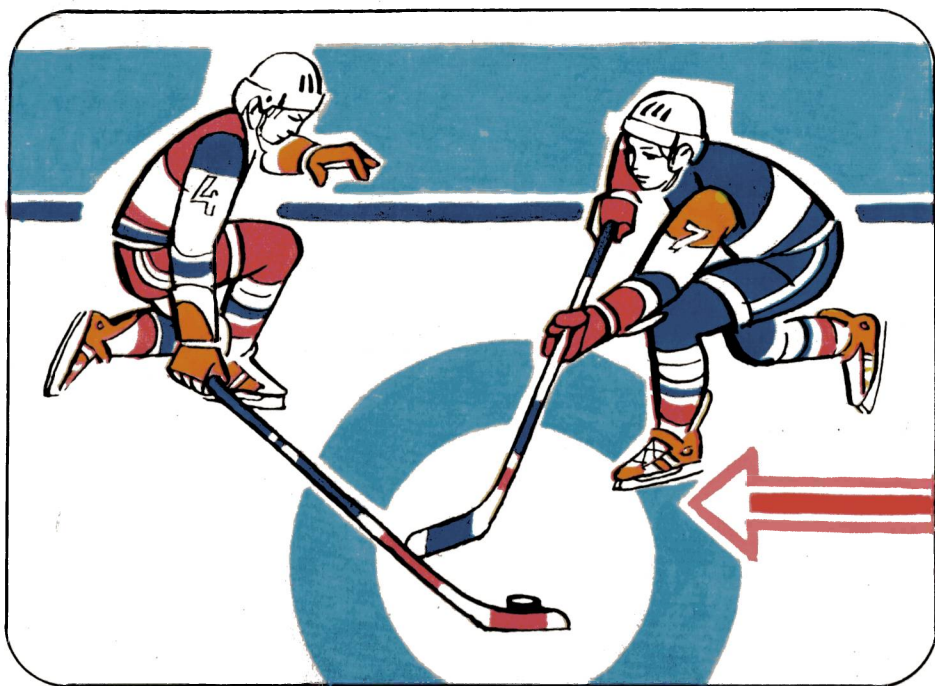
Before body-checking, force the opponent with the puck to the boards or into the corner, depriving him of a manoeuvre. You can body-check in the centre, but only when you have a partner at your side. Otherwise, the rival may break through to your undefended goal.

The moment the opponent is in front of you, break sharply and assume a firm stance—plant your feet wide apart and bend your trunk slightly forward. When checking the opponent with your chest, place the stick's blade on ice, do



Raise the opponent's stick

Sometimes it is expedient to press the puck against boards



Skating up to the opponent

not put your head and your free hand forward so as not to violate the rules. Without using hands, check your opponent with your chest, and then push him with your body. Push him somewhat sidewise to put him off balance.

Body-checking is not an end in itself. It is used only when taking the puck away.

When pushing with your shoulder, the preparatory movements of the player are the same as when pushing with your chest. The only difference is that your opponent is stopped with your shoulder and then pushed. When tackling for the puck, it is strictly prohibited by the rules to put your elbow forward, to stop your

opponent with your hand, to trip and to hold him with your stick. A player is penalised for these violations.

When the opponent is at your side check him by pushing him with your hip. Breaking your skating sharply, move your hip to the side. It may take your opponent unawares and he will lose both the puck and his balance.

The common mistake beginners make is that instead of the hip they use their foot and it looks like tripping, prohibited by the rules.

When the player masters snatching the puck and body-checking no tackling will be difficult for him and he will be able to act prudently and resolutely.

You must also know how to block an opponent and use it against him in your own zone when he is without the puck. In blocking, it is permitted to simply stand in front of your opponent without resorting to pushing. Your task in this situation is to prevent the opponent from free actions and to make him change the direction of skating.

How to Stop the Puck with Your Body

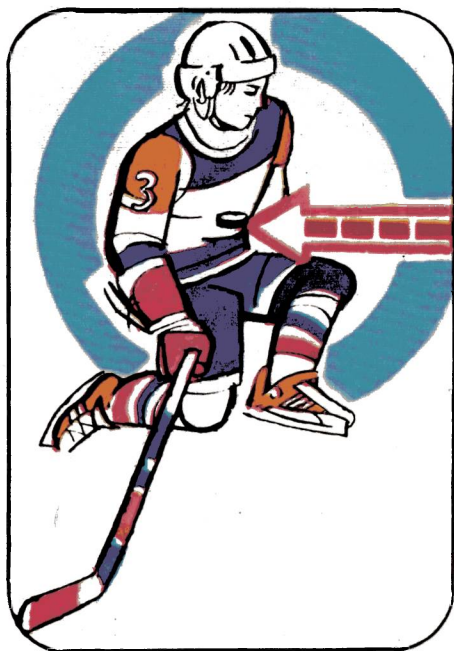
If a player is too late to disrupt a pass of an opponent or prevent him from shooting, the only thing to do is to skate and block the puck with the body.

If a shot is made from a distance, skate under it in your upright stance: the feet together, the stick held in one hand at your side, while your other hand is ready to catch puck. In this position you can easily change direction of your skating, if your opponent changes his decision to shoot and will try by-pass you or pass puck to his partner. You can always try to knock the puck away or intercept the pass.

If a shot is made from a distance of less than 10 metres, it is expedient to skate to meet the puck on one of your knees, holding the stick in one hand and holding the other hand aside. Try to cover as greater a portion of your goal as possible and at the same time be ready to get up on your feet and (should the situation on the ice change) continue the struggle for the puck or state in the open to receive the puck from your partner.

Taking the puck away from the opponent moving parallel to him





It is inexpedient to drop to both knees, because you will find difficulty to get up on your feet again. Only when you are sure that the opponent aims for the goal, drop to both your knees, blocking puck with your body.

You can stop the flying puck with your hand when it is shot from a distance and you have sufficient time. The puck is caught in the open palm of your free hand. At the moment of contact, make a shock-absorbing movement by moving your palm slightly in the direction of the puck's flight.

It is best of all to stop the puck sent across the ice with your skate, most frequently with the inner side of it. Sometimes the puck is stopped with both skates by spreading the toes wide apart.

Exercises to Improve Your Skill

Speed skating is the basis of a player's training. Before offering the beginners a few exercises which may help raise their speed, it must be reminded that the speed of a hockey player is somewhat different from that of a speed skater. The distance, so-called cruiser speed, is not so much important here as the ability to start instantaneously, to change skating pace and rhythm, to break sharply and to make a new lunge. It is important to be able to skate quickly 5, 10 or 20 metres and not the whole of 500 or 1,500 distances. Mincing steps fortified by a powerful push-off may become essential for train-

Choose yourself how to check the puck with your body





Making turns round the puck

ing an excellent player. Have you ever noticed the way Alexander Maltsev skates? His footwork is similar to that of his opponent, nevertheless, he (before your own eyes) easily leaves the latter behind. Why? Only because of a more powerful push-off.

It must be said from the beginning that you should not expect to boost your speed sharply. Speed is a quality which yields least of all to improvement. It can be developed by 17-18 per cent from the

outset, whereas strength can be increased by 100 and even by 200-300 per cent.

Here are a few exercises which can help you to improve your skating speed.

Skate with your face and back forward along the big and small figure "eight", learning to take your left foot over the right and not only your right over the left. The chain of players should be led by a boy who is the best skater, so that the rest could copy the most rational and correct movements.



Skating along the figure "eight"

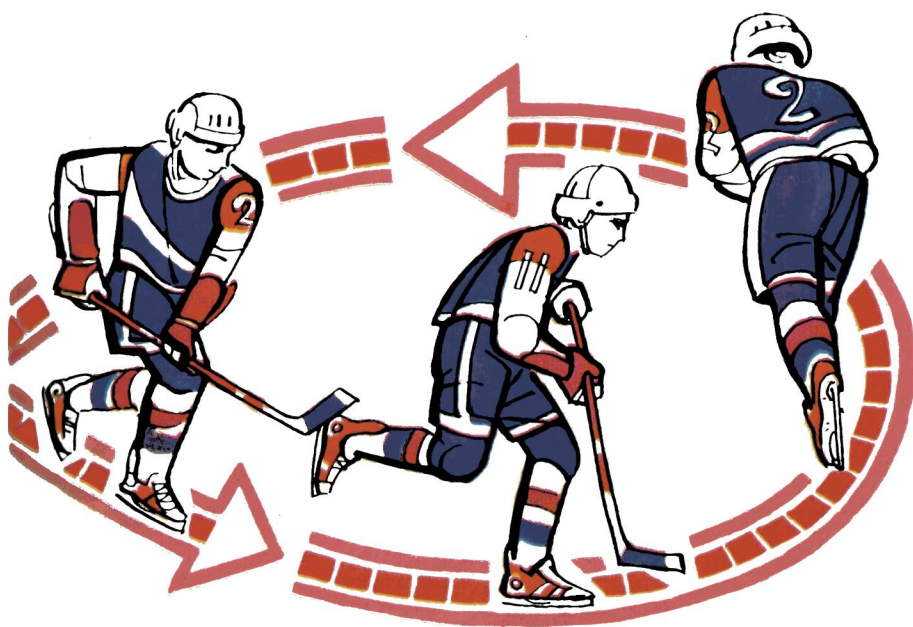
Try waltzing holding onto one another. One is skating with his back forward and the other—with his face forward. The one who is skating with his face forward, watches his partner's footwork and watches that his skating technique is correct.

Two boys follow each other holding sticks. One of them breaks sharply, now to his left, now to his right, while the first one tries to follow at maximum speed.

Skating in deep crouch.

Jumping on skates from foot to foot. With springy jumps. Jumps over the stick, two sticks, held by the coach at some distance apart.

Mastering a new lunge forward after breaking. Stop and then immediately lunge forward, breaking again after 3 or 4 metres and lunging once again. Make sure you stop fully, but at the same time be ready to continue skating, perhaps in another direction.



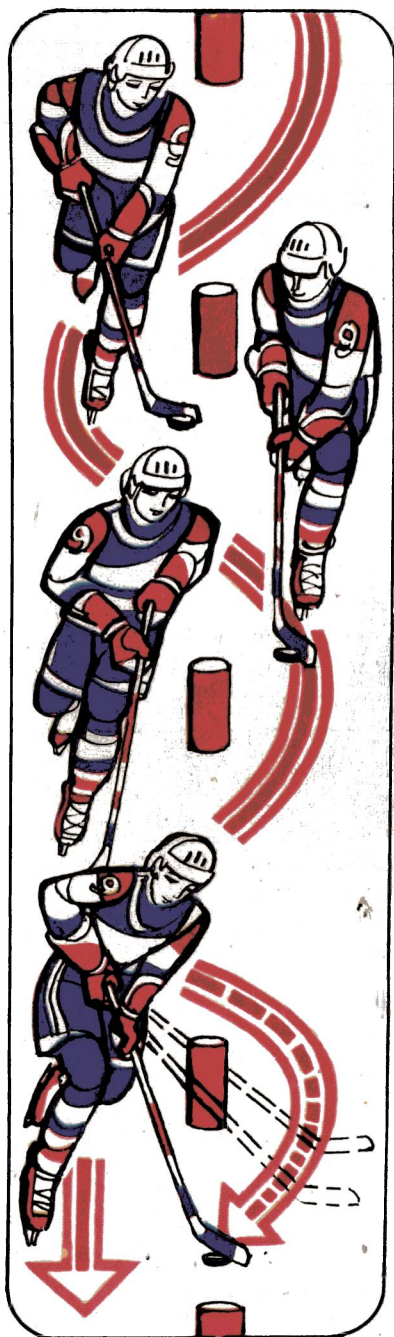
Jumps on with both feet while skating. A running start, jump, a running start, jump—this is the sequence of movement.

Jumps over your goalie, over two goalies lying prone on the ice (they must be well protected).

Dribbling with your skates. A relay: the team is divided into two groups. While dribbling the puck from one board to another, stop the puck precisely on the red and blue lines.

A 8-10-metre acceleration and an immediate lunge back.

Skating up to the puck. Special turns, a turn at the puck—a turn around a circle with a small radius. A player spins practically around the puck. The aim of the exercise: a defenceman must try to retrieve the puck rebounded from the boards or repelled by the goalie and swing back into the attack in a circle with a small radius.



Arrhythmical skating, intermingling lunges with turns and skating with your back forward.

These exercises will help a young player to improve his skating.

Several General Recommendations

The legs slightly bent at the knees, push off with maximum force (that's why all the jumping exercises at training sessions are so important).

Make sure: when skating backwards, crouch deeper than when skating forward and your steps must be slightly shorter.

It is important to preserve your balance when changing the direction of skating sharply.

Do not skate with your body bent too far forward or with your head lowered.

Do not jump skating, glide along the ice.

Here are a few exercises of a more complex nature. Working on them you will learn to skate better and at the same time to pass the puck accurately and to shoot more powerfully. During the game one technical element is dovetailed in with another, they are interrelated and success will come to the player who will try to master all the secrets of the game equally well.

By-passing obstacles. Begin with simple by-passing. The player weaves the puck between all the blocks and shoots at the goal. The higher the speed the better.

In more complicated by-passing the player takes the puck on the left of the

By-passing obstacles

block while he skates on the right. Then he skates on the left past the next block and dribbles the puck on the right.

In still more complicated by-passing the player dribbles the puck with tents—with his head, shoulders, with falls and somersaults, every time ending his sally with a shot at the goal taking it from the “wrong” or “right” side.

By-passing barriers. Make low (35-40 cm.) barriers approximately 120 cm. in width.

Begin with the simple by-passing of these barriers. Then make the exercises more complicated. Pass the puck under the barrier and jump over it, pushing off first with one foot then with another. The barriers are by-passed along one figure “eight” while the player by-passes them along another.

The barriers may be by-passed in pairs. Place them in two rows, but not one next to the other but rather in staggered rows.

The distance between them—6 metres. Players jump over the barriers passing the puck to each other without losing speed.

Then the player dribbling the puck sends it under the barrier, retrieves it after jumping over it and shoots powerfully at the goal under the second barrier.

Eight or ten barriers make exercises interesting, if you display ingenuity, inventiveness and initiative.

Ending our talk about a player’s technique at training at which skating, puck dribbling, passing, and shooting at the goal are improved, I would like to say once again that success will come only to those goalies, defencemen and forwards who will have enough patience and, if you like, courage to repeat the fundamentals of the game over and over again, learn and perfect them—the groundwork on which the building of a real mastery is developed.

Tactics

The match is a multitude of quickly changing and intertwining combinations. After a series of cunning actions the puck is at the opponents' goal but a number of combinations in reply takes it to the other end of the ice.

All plays and all attacks of the teams are subject to a general plan mapped out for the particular match.

A team has to play differently with each opponent, depending on the adversary's strong and weak points. Matches with the same opponent, however, every time demand a new and unexpected tactics.

Young sports fans have probably read or heard over the radio or on television that interesting and unexpected tactical solutions, an untiring creative search, are some of the main advantages of the Soviet national team. World hockey experts unanimously note the main advantage of our squad—unexpectedness of tactical thought.

World championship. Current match.

Thirty minutes before the beginning of the game. The players emerge onto the ice one after another. The teams begin warming up.

At first they skate about the ice in a colourful round dance, by-passing each other, accelerating, or, on the contrary, slowing down. Then the coaches throw in pucks and the players begin dribbling them across the ice. After that comes the next stage of the warming-up—forwards tackle defencemen. The latter are lenient:

forwards must gain confidence in their strength and key themselves up for the game. After some time the trios of forwards, dribbling the puck, attack the goal and now one defenceman has a hard time defending the goal alone. At a sign from the coach, the colourful round dance once again skates swiftly along the boards with everyone even the goalies, who were warming up with the most skilful forwards, joining in. Then the players once again polish up combinations, attack the goal, tackle and accelerate.

During this pre-match warming-up the spectator sees everything he is bound to see during the game. That is why the 15-minute warm-up organised in such a way is called the pre-match overture. Invented by Soviet coaches, who sought their own ways to the summits of mastership, it has now been adopted by many national teams.

What enables the Soviet team overcome formidable opponents? First and foremost, it is due to superiority in physical fitness of the Soviet players following interesting, fruitful and most expedient tactical training.

The Soviet hockey has always sought new tactical patterns which permitted players to utilise their possibilities in the best way. Soviet hockey first proved the effectiveness of the "five in attack and five in defence" system of play, borrowed later by many foreign teams. It was proved of value both theoretically and in practice.



The opponent is a more convenient target than a small puck

This system, the essence of which is that the five players on the ice are constantly on the move, replaced the tactic of two positional defencemen.

An idea born several years ago in the Central Army Club team was not to have two defencemen and three forwards as it had been the case in hockey, but to have two forwards, two halfbacks and one central defenceman.

New roles have appeared in the game.

The central defenceman (sometimes called stopper) stations himself in the direct vicinity of the goal. He plays a strictly positional game, taking no risks, helping the goalie, stopping skilfully pucks with his body and joining in attacks not so much with his forward sallies as

with his skilful passing. As a rule, the stopper does not tackle the puck-carrying opponent in the corner.

It is the task for halfbacks. They are responsible for checking the attacking opponents and organising a counterattack. They must be particularly active in the neutral zone, joining in the attack in turn or all at once, while one of them, depending on the situation, plays the role of a centre forward.

The new system gives forwards an additional strategical advantage, they can attack more boldly and effectively.

In Vienna Polupanov's five used this pattern of play and in Grenoble two units of the Soviet national played it.

A year later, following the 10th Winter Olympic Games, this system was used at world championship in Stockholm by one of the Czechoslovak's fives in which halfback Jan Suchy was particularly good.

The players of Anatoly Firsov's five have become the most striking executors of the new tactical idea. This five, playing in the Central Army Club and in the national team, have achieved notable successes. Stopper Alexander Ragulin, halfbacks Anatoly Firsov and Gennady Tsygankov and forwards Vladimir Vikulov and Valery Kharlamov have decided the outcome of many important matches by their clever play.

The Soviet national team was the first to play in defence at the world championships not with five, as before, but with four players. They act as if the team is shorthanded. The fifth player takes his station in the neutral zone and waits, concealing himself behind the opponents' backs at the red line. As soon as one of the Soviet players snatches puck, it is

immediately addressed upice where the forward has an excellent opportunity, finding himself face to face with the goalie.

The rival team in such cases found itself in a difficult situation. If it attacked in a team, the player lingering in the neutral zone received the puck and frequently scored. Sports fans, who watched the matches of the 1970 World Championship remember how often Vladimir Vikulov, Boris Mikhailov, Alexander Maltsev, Valery Kharlamov found themselves alone with the goalie. When only four players of the opposing team attack, our free man, relieved from playing in defence, began to check the farthest defenceman. Bringing his own checker behind him, he brought the two defencemen close together leaving one of our forwards unchecked. This tactics yielded fruit. At the 1970 World Championship the Soviet national squad scored more than any other team—68 times and let 11—less than any other team—through.

Today the defence by four players is not novel. The experience of the many-times world champions is being adopted by others. But the motto of the Soviet ice hockey is to seek new tactical methods constantly and indefatigably. The Soviet teams are true to this motto.

INDIVIDUAL Tactics

Individual tactics cover the actions of a player during the game.

If a player rationally uses during the match his physical fitness and technical skills, one can say that his individual tactics are good.



Vyacheslav Starshinov

Learning the Opponent

How fast is this or that player of the rival team on skates? How does he play—with his right or left hand? Does he body-check? Does he use feints? How does he pass and receive passes? How does he use the stick when tackling for a puck? How does he play in attack and in defence? From what position does he shoot at the goal? These questions must interest every player.

There are general recommendations obligatory for all, which belong to the sphere of individual tactical actions.

Selecting a Position

During an attack the defenceman must station himself between the puck-carrying opponent and his own goal.



Skating backwards a defenceman is trying to get the puck away from the opponent

The defending players station themselves in a staggered formation: the first one meets the player with the puck, the second one is slightly behind him ready to help his partner. At the same time this player controls his flank. If both defencemen are stationed in one line, should the attacker outplay one of the defencemen, he will find an unprotected goal before him.

At the moment of attack remember that it is not the puck-carrying opponent (if, of course, he is not in the immediate vicinity of the goal) who presents the most danger, but his partner in the crease. That is why it is highly important to mark a player in this most dangerous zone. A

defenceman covering the forward in the crease should at the same time keep an eye on the puck.

There are certain standard patterns when playing in defence.

One Defenceman Against One Forward

In this case it is best of all for the defenceman to body-check. The opponent is a more convenient target than the small puck, which in itself is not dangerous without a player.

If the forward has already shot at the goal, follow him and not the puck. If it found its mark, then it is too late for the

defenceman to do anything. While marking the opponent attentively, he will obstruct him from moving forward and converting a rebound into goal.

One Defenceman Against Two Forwards

In this case the defenceman must take up his station at the centre between the attackers so as to prevent them from passing puck to each other. But it is also important not to let a puck-carrying forward through to the goal. Skating backwards, the defenceman may prevent the attackers making play.

Retreating, the player must not attack the puck-carrying forward rashly, because the latter may easily outplay him or pass the puck to his partner. The attempt to take the puck away is justified in case a pass has been made and the forward hasn't yet gained control of the puck. That is why it is important to try to attack him the moment he receives the puck.

If the defenceman is outplayed and the forward manages to pass the puck to his partner, the defenceman nevertheless continues to check his man. The goalie in this case will know that he has to watch one forward and not two.

Two Defencemen Against Two Forwards

The principle of the game is much the same when one defenceman plays against one forward. Remember that your mates are covering you in a staggered pattern. The defenceman attacking the puck-carrying forward must be several metres ahead of his partner.

Two Defencemen Against Three Forwards

In this case, too, the players take up a staggered position with the rear defenceman called upon not only to support his partner but, naturally, take in good time a position between his goal and the attacking forwards.

One Defenceman Against Three Forwards

This is a very grave situation but do not lose your head. It is important to take a correct position along ice centre. The wingers, skating for the goal along the wings, will inevitably worsen their position narrowing down the angles for shooting. If the puck is passed to the forward in the centre, he will have a defenceman and a goalie in his way.

In any case, the defending player must try to station himself so as to force the attacker to slow down. This will help him gain time and his partners come to his help. It will be better still if the defenceman manages to press the forward to the board or into the corner.

On the contrary, during an attack the essence of selecting the proper position is to occupy a most advantageous spot for receiving a pass or shooting at the goal (or passing a puck to a partner, if shooting is impossible from this position).

Situations change during the match, therefore, the player must constantly look for the most advantageous position. A player who stops in one place is more often than not excluded from the game. It is the player who is constantly on the move, who is constantly trying to take up the most advantageous position who achieves success.

Every player must keep an eye on the puck, not to miss a pass, keep his stick permanently flat on the ice, especially when a player is preparing for a final shot.

After making a pass, do not remain an idle onlooker, but immediately take up a position most advantageous for a return pass or for converting a rebound from the goalie into the net.

By-Passing the Opponent

There are quite a few methods of by-passing an opponent. Here are some of them.

To by-pass an opponent who is a slower skater, change your speed and direction of skating. You must force the opponent move about so as to find the right moment to tear away from him.

Use a feint against an agile player. If he falls for it, he is bound to zoom past you.

Use the same tactic against a player who tries to body-check you at any price. First of all find out on which side your opponent is strongest and try to outplay him on his "weaker" side.

If a player has not one but two opponents before him, he should move usually to the side of the faster one. Falling for your manoeuvre, the opponent will start from his place and the lane between them will widen.

In those cases when collision with an opponent cannot be avoided, try to outpace him with a sharp and sudden lunge of your trunk and push first.

If an opponent tries to knock the puck away from you with his stick, it is recommended to shift the stick to the opposite side from the opponent and try to block him with your free hand.

When the opponent plays stronger with one of his sides, it is important to feint to this side. He will readily bring his favourite "weapon" into action and then you may try quickly to play to the other side.

If you are physically stronger than your opponent, it is expedient to use this advantage by body-checking during tackling.

It sometimes happens that an opponent does not react to your feints. Analyse the reasons for this and try to bring variety into your feints.

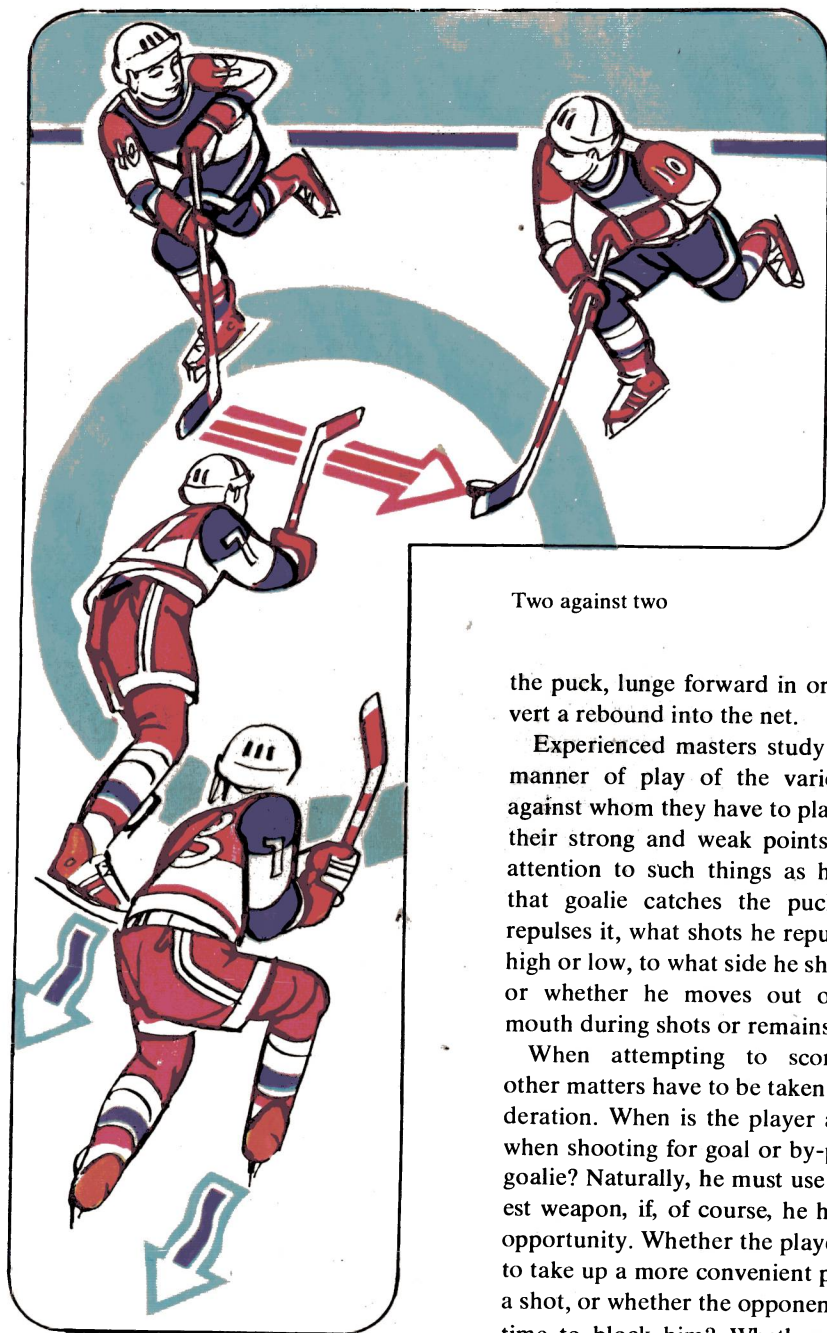
You may outplay your opponent individually (though this may be most difficult) but also by using a pass or by playing the puck with your partner. Always remember that a pass is the fastest and most reliable way of moving forward to the opponents' goal.

One of the main rules preconditioning success in outplaying an opponent is to pass the puck only when your partner is in a better position, or when your pass improves the position of your team. Never abuse passes, however.

If you find yourself close to the goalie (less than two metres) it is very hard to score. In this case make a feint before shooting (false shot, false by-passing, etc.) in order to make the goalie budge from his place.

The main principles used in by-passing are as follows: make the goalie move from his place, then push the puck into the gap in the opposite corner or in any other part of the goal mouth which the goalie is unable to protect.

When the goalie is blocked by players and cannot see the puck it is better to attack the goal low trying to hit the unprotected part of the goal. Having shot

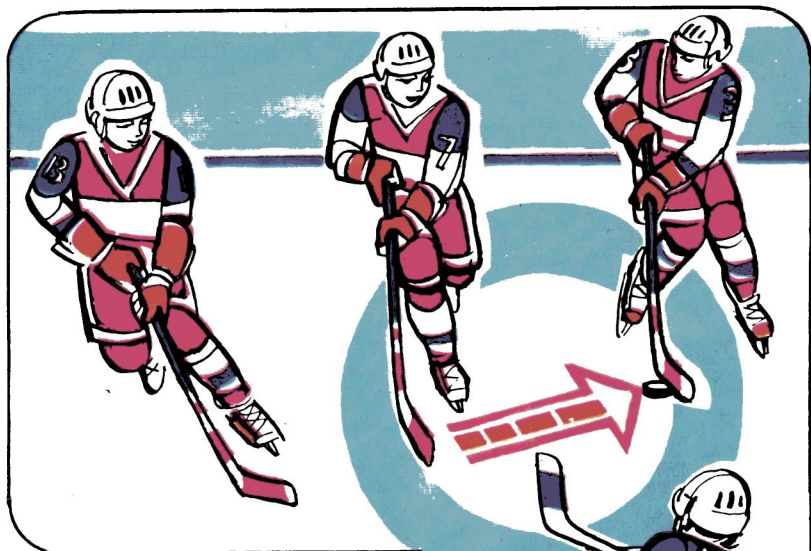


Two against two

the puck, lunge forward in order to convert a rebound into the net.

Experienced masters study closely the manner of play of the various goalies against whom they have to play as well as their strong and weak points. They pay attention to such things as how this or that goalie catches the puck, how he repulses it, what shots he repulses better: high or low, to what side he shifts quicker or whether he moves out of the goal mouth during shots or remains in goal.

When attempting to score, several other matters have to be taken into consideration. When is the player at his best: when shooting for goal or by-passing the goalie? Naturally, he must use his strongest weapon, if, of course, he has such an opportunity. Whether the player has time to take up a more convenient position for a shot, or whether the opponent will be in time to block him? Whether the player



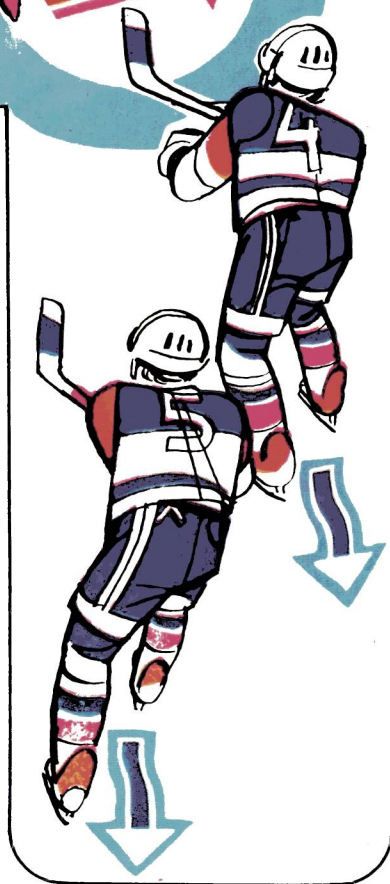
Two against three

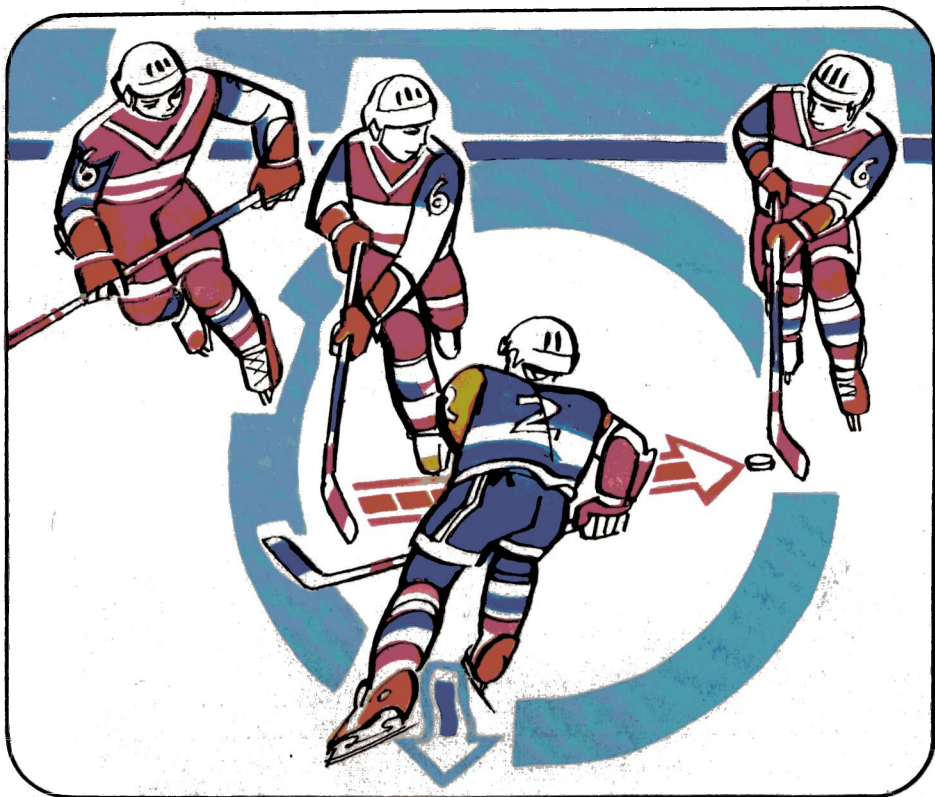
is at his best in this match (if, for instance, he has an 'off' period shooting for goal, perhaps he should try and pass the puck to his partner).

Do not reveal your secrets at the beginning of the game, diversify your tactics, try to confuse the goalie. This is the best way to find out the weakest spots of the goalie and to use your strongest weapon at decisive moments.

Face-offs

It is very important to play correctly during the face-off. If a player seizes the puck after a face-off, it will be of great advantage for his team: at the opponents' goal he may immediately start an attacking combination, at his goal—eliminate a serious danger and in neutral zone—retain control of the puck.





One against three

In the attacking zone during the face-off players station themselves so that they can immediately begin an attack if the puck is theirs.

In the defence zone during the face-off players station themselves so that should the puck be lost they can cover all the opponents and in case the puck is theirs—organise a swift counter-attack.

The player taking part in the face-off must:

firmly stand on the ice, placing his feet wide apart;

move the lower hand gripping the stick closer to the blade in order to create a more powerful lever;

keep a close eye on the puck in the referee's hand before the face-off;

if there is a possibility (at the opponents' goal) try and shoot at the goal; the goalie may not be prepared for it;

when possible back-pass the puck to a partner;

vary actions during face-offs.

Defence

Defence in the Opponents' Zone

Your goal may be defended in the opponent's zone as well. Yes, don't be surprised! In other words, pursue the opponent all over the ice. This is called pressing. Pressing requires good physical fitness.

It is used only when there is the same number of players in the teams or when your team is in the majority.

Defence begins when the puck has been lost. If your opponent managed to take the puck away from you, tackle him immediately.

Those on the defensive should always remember that retreat is the last thing. It is important to get the puck away from the opponent in his zone. In this case the threat to your goal is eliminated and there is a chance to mount a dangerous attack on the opponents' goal.

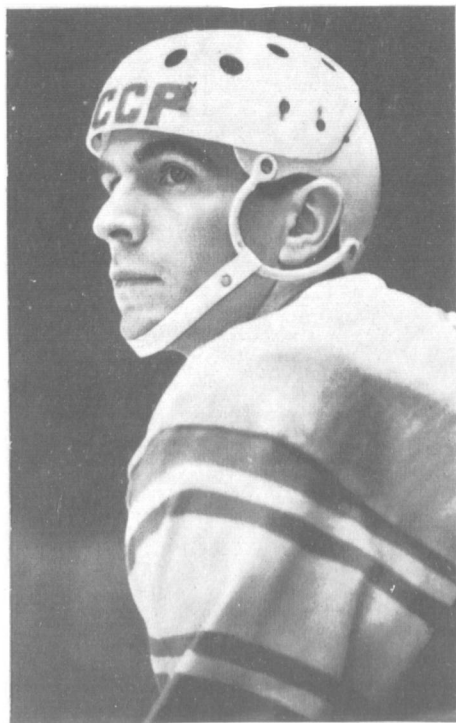
Defence With Retreat (Passive Pressing)

In certain situations the whole team may fall back when the puck is lost. Forwards, each in his own place, check the opponent's forwards. A road-block is thrown up between the red and blue lines, in which your defencemen also take an active part. Here the players try to take the puck away from the rivals or force them to shoot the puck at the face boards.

Bring variety into your retreat. For example, leave one of the forwards ahead, who will skate next to the puck-carrier. Or two of your forwards may attempt to



To by-pass outskate the opponent



Vitaly Davydov

take the puck away, or contain the opponents. This tactic is good to preserve strength, when your team has an advantage or when your opponents act individually.

Vitaly Davydov, many-times world and thrice Olympic champion, shares his secrets.

Naturally, the main task of the defencemen is to defend the goal, and to help their goalie. But a team will hardly win if it will attack only with its forwards, if the defencemen will not support the forwards.

"Five in attack and five in defence"—is the main tactical leit-motif of modern hockey and any conception of the game is nothing but a variety of this main tactical idea.

But how is a defenceman to act in the offensive? There is no consensus here and

this is good: you must agree that if all our players looked alike the game would lose its appeal.

So, some defencemen like to attack cutting into the opponents' camp, heading straight for the goal. This has always been the manner of the players of our national team—Victor Kuzkin, Igor Romishevsky, Gennady Tsygankov, Czechoslovak ace Jan Suchy and of the strongest Swedish defenceman Lennart Svedberg, while my colleague in the national team Alexander Ragulin, who has a wealth of experience, or, for instance, Joseph Horesovsky, one of the veterans of the Czechoslovak national team, do not like to take risky long raids. They are afraid being carried away by the attack and if the puck is lost of not being able to get back to defend the goal. They think that the main form of defencemen's participation in attack is an accurate and timely pass to their forwards.

I think that it is more important for defenceman to be able to organise a counter-attack. When I snatch the puck away, I try without losing a second to make an accurate pass to one of my forwards, speeding for the enemy goal. I try to pass in such a way that the puck flies right behind the opponents' backs: in this case our three forwards may find themselves facing two of their opponents or even one.

I never hasten to shoot the puck rebounded from the goalie or from an opponent. I think it is the task of one of the forwards. It is the defenceman who has to worry, above all, about creating a scoring situation for his forwards and only then does he take part in storming the goal. If the defenceman, having obtained the puck, will quickly leave two enemy forwards behind, it will be his contribution into the attack.

Defence in the Neutral Zone

When the puck is lost, forwards are skating back into the neutral zone. Now the forces of the defenders are not scattered all over the rink but are grouped on one of its halves. Forwards together with defencemen can easily put up a mighty block.

The puck-carrying player must be slowed down and forced to make an indi-

vidual move. This can be attained if all the other players are checked. Force him to the boards where it is easier to body-check or deprive him of freedom of action.

If the attacker with the puck is checked, his partners have to stop or skate along the blue line, thus narrowing down their front of attack.

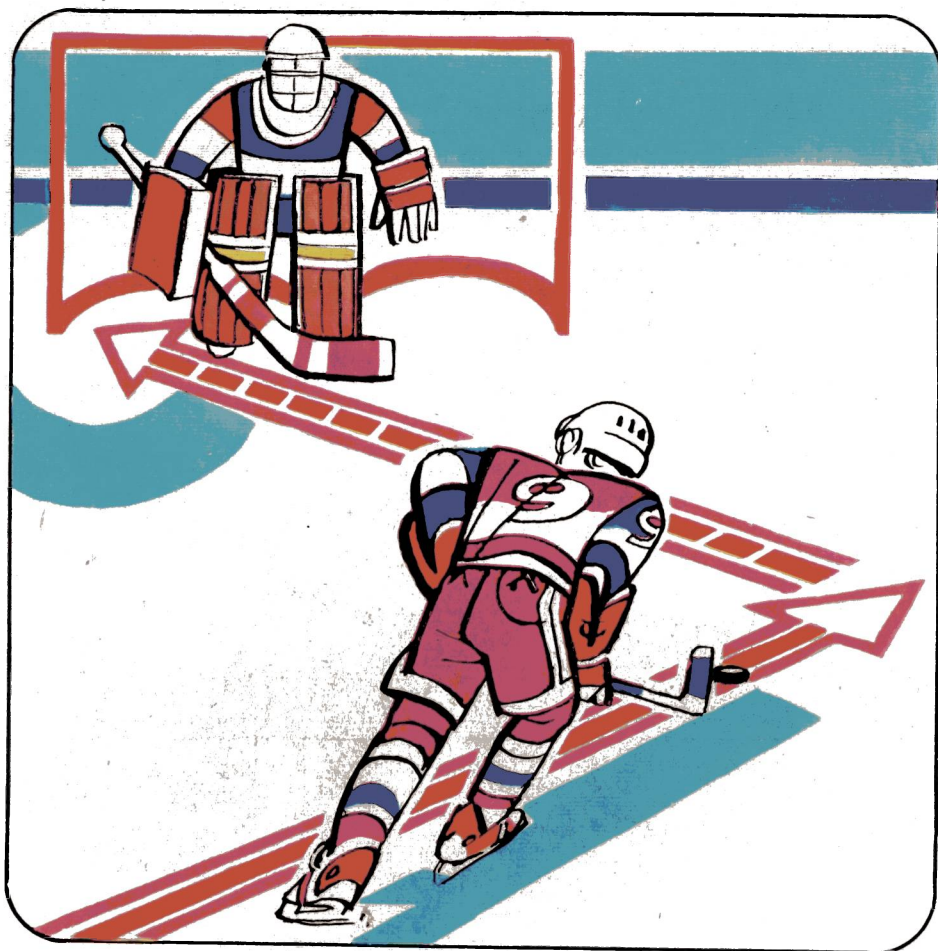
When one of the players has no time to get back, a defensive block must be put with remaining players.

When two players have no time to get back home, an attempt must be made to force the player with the puck to the boards before he reaches the red line, without trying too hard to take the puck away from him. Having crossed the red line, the defenceman farthest from the puck retreats and shifts to the centre. The other defenceman also falls a little back. If the opponent attacks along the centre, the third player taking part in the defence allows him to skate into his zone and there in the limited space tackles him.

Very often unexpected situations arise during the match when three attackers are met by two defencemen (sometimes even one). In this case do not tackle the opponent, but at the same time it would be wrong not to try and do something in the neutral zone. One of the defencemen stations himself opposite the player with the puck and tries to drive him closer to the wingman. The second defenceman skates back in such a way as to be always ready to come to his partner's help or to intercept the puck if there is an opportunity. He tackles only if his goal is in danger.

Pass the puck to your partner to dodge the opponent





Before shooting into the left corner of the net, make the goalie move to the right

Defence in the Defence Zone

If the team fails to nip the opponents' attack at the very beginning, it must organise the defence in its zone. There are two types of defence in the defence zone: positional and the defence "man for man". Of late our players use a mixed defence.

In **positional defence** players cover a

definite zone, tackling the opponents who encroach upon the areas controlled by them. Usually opponents are met at the border of one's zone.

This type of defence is often used by the Canadian, American, and Swedish teams. It is used in cases when the opponent has highly effective trios and defencemen need help, or in cases when the opponent



Make a low shot if the goalie is screened by the players

fails to make good use of its defencemen to consummate attacks.

The positional defence ensures reliable protection of the nearest approaches to the goal. It is very convenient for passing over to counter-attack but creates certain difficulties for those on the defensive when the opponent mounts a numerical superiority.

The defensive “man for man” tactic is based on personal checking of players. The team usually resorts to it when defencemen can successfully tackle the opponents, when the rival defencemen are very active in attack and should be neutralised and when the team, upon losing the puck, tries to retrieve it in the rival’s zone.

If the opponent has broken into the zone, the centre forward of the defending team continues to check the centre-man of the opposing team. The wingers stop checking their opposites at the blue line and take up stations here, preparing to develop a counter-attack and neutralise enemy defencemen. It is the defenceman who usually tackles for the puck in the corner while his partner checks the forward at the goal. If the attack shifts to the other wing, the defencemen change roles.

Very often two wingmen play the puck between themselves in the wing. In this case there can be two solutions: two defencemen tackling the opponent or one of them remaining in front of the goal. In the first case, it is easier to take the puck away from the rival, but in the second, the defenceman behind will be a reliable supporter.

The best variant will be when a defenceman covers the flank and the other one stations himself in front of the goal. A defenceman, skating to the boards, tries for the puck with his stick, preventing the opponents' forward from shooting at the goal.

Mixed defence. This is a synthesis of positional defence and "man for man" tactic.

When the opponent breaks into the defence zone, forwards must pursue him. One of them prevents the opponents' forward from skating behind the goal, trying to press him against the boards, to body-check him or poke the puck away with his stick. When the forward is unable to check the opponent, he "passes" him on to his defenceman and skates back to the blue line. If the defenceman has

already tackled an opponents' forward, he must wait before getting back to the blue line, because the puck may rebound to him and he may launch a counter-attack with a pass or a by-pass. Meanwhile, the other defenceman takes up his position in front of the goal. The centre forward checks the opponent's centre forward.

In mixed defence the defenceman more often than not acts in collaboration with the forward and not singly. This makes taking the puck away easier and facilitates a prompt development of a counter-attack.

In the "man for man" defence tactics the instance when one defenceman acts against two forwards is of special interest. Here, in a mixed defence situation the players act as follows: the wingman of the defending team, seeing that the defenceman of his team loses the encounter and the opponent may penetrate the depth of the zone and attack the goal, must skate back into the depth of the zone, try to interfere with his stick and then tackle the opponent. If the opponents' forward passes the puck to his defenceman, the forward must quickly lunge ahead and try to catch the puck with his body.

This kind of defence is linked with a great deal of "work" for the wingmen. Therefore, they must be physically fit so as to be able to shoulder an increased load during the game.

The mixed defence tactics used in modern hockey when the trio of forwards resorts to pressure, as well as in playing against a team the defencemen of which are not very active in attack.



G. Tsygankov

Gennady Tsygankov, Merited Master of Sports, many-times world and twice Olympic champion, shares his secrets.

It is not always the case that defencemen have a chance to take up a firing position, to join in an attack and lunge for the enemy goal. More often than not they have to make long-distance shots approximately from the blue line.

It is quite far from the blue line to the goal and so as to make the threat a serious and real one the defenceman must learn to shoot powerfully and accurately. A mighty and killing shot is not an accident, it is the result, it is the result of persistent and painstaking work at training sessions, work which demands zeal, persistence and will.

The power of the shot or, in other words, the speed of the puck's flight depends on the physical fitness of a player and his skill of executing quite a complicated technical movement. He has to impart the puck the whole striking strength of his stick for it to fly like a bullet.

At the moment of a shot, I lean forward, shifting the weight from my back foot to the one nearest to the puck: this allows me to put the weight of my body into the shot. When making a shot I look at the goal.

I take an average swing for a shot. Other players such as, for instance, the Central Army Club defenceman Alexander Gusev or Spartak man Alexei Makarov, who have powerful shots, take quite a sweeping movement. Forwards Vladimir Vikulov and Valery Kharlamov, on the contrary, take a short swing. As for Anatoly Firsov, he slaps the puck after a long or a short swing.

I usually try to hit puck with the middle of the blade. However, my partners prefer to shoot differently: some of them hit the puck with the blade's end, others—with its heel.

I work on shooting techniques for half an hour during my training session: 15 minutes during warm-up and 15 minutes during the session.

A defenceman will hardly succeed if he shoots at random: the shot must be well-aimed. When I am not interfered with, I try to shoot at the corner unprotected by the goaltender; I send the puck across the ice or let it fly—the decision depends on what is more inconvenient for the goalie.

The Attack

Its Beginning

Usually the attack originates at your own goal. The collapse of an enemy attack means the beginning of your own. Where does the attack peter out more often than not? Naturally, at the goal being stormed. It is here that most of players are concentrated and the defending team is often in superiority.

Assume that the opponents' attack is frustrated and one of the defencemen has the puck. How can an attack be mounted in the best way?

First of all, take the puck out of your zone with the least risk of losing it. Assume, the goalie has repulsed the shot and the puck rebounded into the corner. Here left wingman retrieved it. It is best of all to send the puck along the boards to one of your forwards. If the rival manages to snatch the puck away it will happen where it is least dangerous for the goal.

When the rival team resorts to pressing and attacks the left wingman who is in the possession of the puck, he must shift the game to the flank. He passes the puck behind the goal to his partner who must meet it half way. This is a must—not to

pass the puck across one's own goal mouth but behind the goal.

At times an inexperienced defenceman tries to take the puck across the crease. It must never be done. If the rival manages to snatch the puck away, a goal is inevitable.

If the rivals cover all the routes of possible passes, try a rebound from the board. Best of all use the rebound in the zone between the goal and the blue line, where, as a rule, there are no opponents. Remember the well-known law of physics—the angle of a fall is equal to that of a rebound.

In general do not try to pass the puck across the centre of your zone but along the flank: it is safer.

The Development of an Attack

The neutral zone is the zone for the development of an attack. It is important to outplay the opponent here and to leave at least one defenceman behind you. But the development of an attack depends on the tactics of the defending team. Assume, the opponents tackle for puck all over the ice, in other words, they use pressing tactics. In this case develop the attack as follows: all the forwards pick up speed, the trio skates into the attacking zone and attacks the goal on the go.

But what is to be done if the opponent decides not to press you all over the ice but resorts to a defensive variant, falling back with the entire team? How in this case is the attack to be developed and finalised?

Imagine that the forwards with the puck are in the neutral zone and have all the players of the rival team before them, none of them tackling for the puck near

the central line. The opponent's tactical spring slowly compresses so as to entice the forwards into a trap. Then all of a sudden it recoils. The three forwards face all the five players of the opposing team.

The rivals' main forces group at the boundary between the red and the blue lines, while the forwards have to mount their attack in one line without supporting each other. True, defencemen can be brought into the attack along one of the flanks. Nevertheless, no numerical superiority will be achieved, although the risk will be much greater. How is this tactical task to be resolved?

First of all, let us answer a question "what is the defending team counting upon?" Its players are preparing to snatch the puck at the zone boundary and counter-attack with superior force. They will realise that not all the forwards of the opposing team will manage to get back home. Hence they have an obvious advantage. Therefore, mount the attack actively, virtually "seek" out a rival and try to outplay him in the neutral zone. If you manage to outplay even one of the opponents, consider that your team is in their zone. It is impossible for four players to put up good defence at a 30-metre straight. The rivals will have to fall back to their own goal.

What if the rivals line-up at their blue line? Then they have to be outplayed at high speed, supporting the attack with one forward or passing the puck into the attacking zone so as to tackle for it there. In both cases rivals will be deprived of the possibility to mount a swift and dangerous counter-attack. Naturally, having passed the puck into the zone, you may lose the initiative for a time. There is no choice in this situation. Upon seeing that

the opposing team has lined-up at the blue line, the player with the puck can fall back and repeat the attack in a trio.

The young player must learn the most important principle of hockey: while mounting an attack in the neutral zone, pass to a player who is ahead of his partners so as they do not find themselves off side.

Finalising the Attack

The player, who skates with the puck into the attacking zone, creates an immediate danger to the goal. No sharp attack will follow if he veers into the corner, or skates along the board.

A player does not always have a chance to attack the goal on the move. What is to be done in this case? Never retreat into the corner. If a player is skating at high speed and his partners are somewhat behind, he must proceed to the goal outstripping his rival and pass to his partners from there.

But here is another situation: the attacking player fails to push his way forward being blocked by two players. There is no one to pass to: his partners are either behind or are checked. Then he must use time by skating around in the zone where the rivals cannot tackle him immediately (near the side board) until his partners come to his help. However, do not come too close to the boards or turn your back to the opponent. It is best to turn to him on your side so as to see the rink better. As soon as you notice a free partner, make a fast and accurate pass to him and lunge for the goal.

An attack will be dangerous if the player is constantly on the move. A puck-carrying player must be active and on the

alert. Otherwise he is bound to lose puck. The opponents too must be attentive. If they will be distracted even for an instance, the game will proceed without them. And that means playing short-handed. Forwards must keep trying to shake off their checkers. It isn't difficult to do by retreating, for instance, into the corner or to the flank. But here the player is not active. He must take a position where he will be able to shoot for goal, or find himself near the goal and receive a pass.

Naturally, this is no easy task. But the skill of a player lies exactly in this: to shake off his opponent. He who is more cunning, patient and resourceful in the end wins. You can skate with your checker to the side and, upon seeing that your partner is ready to give you a pass, suddenly lunge forward and attack the goal. Or skate behind the goal where the opponent will hardly follow you. As soon as your opponent loses sight of you, take up an advantageous position and wait for your partner's pass.

Your team-mate must pass the puck not just to a free player, but to the one, who is in the most advantageous position.

When waiting for the pass, half-turn to your partner so as to see him and the nearest rival: it will be easier for you to stop the puck and shoot it into the goal.

In a heated battle situation an opponent will never let you take up an advantageous position for a shot at the goal. He will try holding your stick, push you, at times violating the rules. You have to be very patient here.

The success of the attack depends on the number of accurate and dangerous passes. The faster the puck travels, the more unexpected situations you create for

your rival. But to make a pass you must have a free player, unchecked even for a second. Therefore, as soon as you've made a pass, take up an advantageous position to receive a return pass.

The defencemen of the attacking team take up their initial stations at the blue line. They shift and change their places along it and move forward without taking risks. Only one defenceman can join in the attack, the other one supporting him.

Here is yet another warning to defencemen taking part in the attack. Assume that a defenceman with the puck is ready to attack the goal. All of a sudden a rival lunges forward and takes station about 3-4 metres away from the attacker. The temptation to shoot at the goal is great. But it is wise to adopt another decision: to pass the puck to a partner or, if this cannot be done, to throw it against the face boards. How to explain these cautious moves? By the responsibility for the actions of the entire team. If the player shoots at goal, the puck may hit an opponent, rebound into the neutral zone where it will be snatched up by the forward of the opposing team.

Defencemen must be everywhere at once and take an active part in the attack, but at the same time they must be reliable guardsmen of their own goal, the bulwark of the team's defence.

Veniamin Alexandrov, Merited Master of Sports, twice Olympic and many-times world champion, shares his secrets.

The principles of our hockey presupposes a collective game with passing. Therefore, a good forward must be able skillfully to co-operate with his partners. I want to warn young players: you will not be able to achieve mutual understanding and creative contact after only one week's training. Be patient and try atten-



tively to size up each other and the peculiarities of play of your partners in a trio.

The most important task for you, if you want to achieve high coordination of your trio and of the entire team, is for all to learn to understand hockey and its main, determining principles. When our trio—Konstantin Loktev, Alexander Almetov and I—were on the ice, we knew what decision any one of us would make in this or that situation. When passing the puck to Loktev or Almetov, I knew beforehand where, at what point, I'd get it back. And upon receiving a pass from my partner, I knew nearly exactly to where at the next instance he would skate. I knew his position even if he didn't see him and did not follow his movements on the ice. I repeat, sometimes I would lose my partner from sight, but I knew he would play the same way as I would have played in the same situation.

Playing in the Numerical Superiority

When your team has a one-player advantage, because an opposition player is in the penalty box it provides the most favourable opportunity to score. Naturally, in this case you must try and "lock" the opposing team in its defence zone and try to score.

First of all, you must break into the zone of the opposing team. Different teams and different players act in this situation differently. The Canadians usually use the play-off method—throwing the puck powerfully against the face boards and swiftly skating into the zone, so as to try to get possession of the puck on the rebound. Certain Canadian teams specially study how the puck rebounds at different rinks. The puck can, for instance, be shot at the boards so that it rebounds behind the goal. In this case two of the attackers, as a rule, chase the puck from both sides and it is difficult for the defencemen to tackle them.

You can take the puck into the opponent's zone using by-passing. Or you can play a combination pattern with your partner before entering the zone. Sometimes a defenceman will join in because he is usually free from checking.

Here is one of the variants of crossing the blue line. The centre forward upon meeting opposition in the neutral zone, passes the puck to the right defenceman, who at the moment is unmarked and can join in the attack. The right wingman at that time must detract the opponent's defenceman at the same flank.

When the puck is in zone, the players must take up the most favourable stations for scoring.

It is best of all for defencemen to position themselves in such a way that one of them stands at the blue line by the boards and another is somewhere in the centre. If the puck is on the left, they shift to the left, and, vice versa, if the puck is dribbled to the right, the defencemen must shift to the right boards.

One of the forwards must constantly be in front of the goaltender. Shifting constantly, the forward blocks the goalie's view. Moreover, the goaltender and the defencemen are kept tense, since a shot at the goal can be made at any moment.

The main thing to do is not give the opponents a second of respite, keep the game moving. Collective play becomes a decisive factor in taking advantage of numerical superiority. The players must station themselves on the ice so as to make use of the unchecked player: to wait for the moment he shakes off his checker and takes up a favourable position for a shot.

The actions of a team in numerical superiority can be regarded as successful if the players manage to make several well-aimed and powerful shots at the goal in the course of two minutes. If these shots are well prepared, one of them is sure to score.

In the case of numerical superiority the defencemen can play a decisive role, especially if they possess powerful shots. They can receive the puck near the blue line almost unimpeded. That is why a team's success largely depends on the technical and tactical mastery of its defencemen.

When the team has a numerical superiority the coach usually sends on his best trio of forwards and the best pair of defencemen. However, other line-ups are

possible: four forwards and one defence-man or even five forwards (when the team is losing in the last minutes of the game). In these cases the forwards positioned at the blue line, must have powerful shots.

Playing Shorthanded

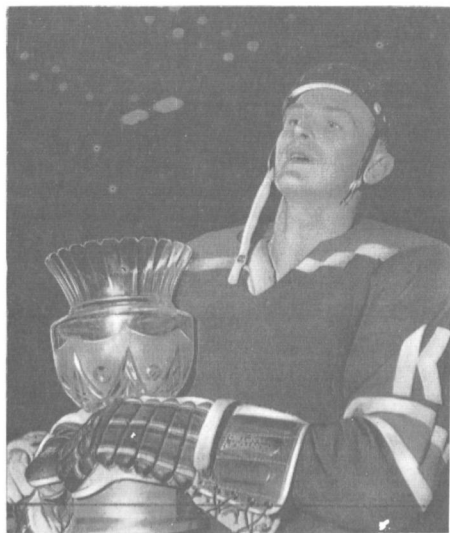
The minutes when the team plays shorthanded are the most trying. During this brief spell all the players' best qualities, such as physical fitness, their technical and tactical skills and their will-power, come under test. Accuracy, quick thinking and readiness to give everything you've got must be the motto at such moments.

Very often a team with numerical superiority whips up the pace of the game thinking that the defending team will sooner or later err and it will score. In such cases it will be more appropriate to slow down the pace and stop the game as often as possible. The puck can be pinned to the boards, best of all in the neutral zone. Or it can be sent out of its zone to the opponents' goal. The attacking team in this case has to expend additional effort to enter the attacking zone once more.

Any stoppage of the game will be to the advantage of the team playing shorthanded. Its players will have a respite, while their opponents are made to reduce the pace of the game.

Every team must have players who are excellent when the team plays shorthanded.

What are the requirements of "specialists" of playing shorthanded? First of all, they must be able to impede an attack and organise a counter-attack as far as pos-



V. Alexandrov

sible in the opponents' zone. Assume, the defending team manages to seize the puck. At such moments the "specialist" in playing shorthanded, who may be a wizard in by-passing, should control puck in the neutral zone as long as possible in order to safeguard his own goal. To consume time, the puck must be sent across the ice to the opponents' side.

If the opponents break into the zone of the defending team, its players must occupy the territory in front of their goal, pressing the opponents to the blue line or to the boards. The part of the ice between the face board and the goal line can also be left to them. The most important thing is not to let the opponents penetrate the boundaries of the "goal trapezium"—a section of the rink from which it is easy to score. Long-distance shots are not very dangerous if the defending team keeps the opponents' attackers in the goal area

under the control and skilfully blocks shots at the goal.

In cases when the defending team has an opportunity to seize the puck, it must act resolutely, but with reasonable risk. When it is impossible to seize the puck, the team must try to stop the game, to pin the puck against the boards.

It is very important to bring fresh reserves into the "fighting" at the first opportunity, because it is very difficult to oppose five players with four of its own.

The last seconds of the penalty time demand particular attention, because if the team slackens pace for an instance, the opponent will score and the two strenuous minutes of playing shorthanded will go down the drain.

How to station players in the best way if the team plays in the minority?

When the opponents possess the puck in the neutral zone, defencemen must skate back to the blue line and be ready to meet the opponents at the boundary of their zone. Two other players should not attack the puck-carrying opponent in the centre because he may easily outplay them here, but rather start checking the opponents' wingmen. Then the puck carrier will have to enter the zone independently, and this will be rather complicated for him because the entire blue line will be covered by defencemen.

What is the line-up in a team defending in the minority? If the opponents managed to break into the defending zone? A most dangerous player is the one in the crease, therefore, he must be given maximum attention.

A most difficult trial awaits a team two of whom are sent off the ice. In this case all the defenders must take up their positions in front of the goal and prevent the

opponents from taking shots at the goal from the "goal trapezium." A player of the defending team, should he manage to seize the puck, may try to attack individually, but he has no right to take a risk; in the event of losing the puck, he must immediately return to his initial position.

An Example of a Training Session in Tactics

Warming-up without skates.

Skating in a circle, skating in pairs. Passing the puck from one player to another. Shots at the goal. 5-10 minutes.

Shots after a lunge, alternating rhythm. A player skates leisurely, then makes a dash and then slows down again. 5 minutes.

Three players attack with no opposition. Trio of forwards pass the puck to one another in one movement, simultaneously executing gymnastic exercises: after passing the puck crouch and put one of your feet forward. While skating all three players imitate feints, shots at goal. 10 minutes.

Next assignment. Five against no opposition. The trio skates towards an opponents' goal passing two pucks to one another. The puck must be passed to all players: from wing to wing, to the centre, ahead and at a diagonal. The attack is finalised with a shot at the goal. Pay attention: the pucks should be shot in succession so as not to injure the goalkeeper, but at minimal intervals. 10-15 minutes.

Exercise 1+3+1. A pass from the defenceman behind the goal to the centre forward, who passes it to the left or right wing and dashes to station himself behind his partner's back. The left winger shifts to the centre, passes to the right winger

and skates to take up his station behind the latter's back (the principle of shifting of the players is very simple: a player skates and takes up this station, swiftly replacing the forward who has received the puck). Do not crowd the middle of the rink, try to move to the wings. While forwards are passing the puck to one another, the defenceman, who has initiated this combination with a pass from behind the goal, dashes to his partner in defence. If he makes it—the attack is frustrated. 10-15 minutes.

Put pucks away. Now is the time for speed skating. The team lines up at the blue line and dashes to the nearest face boards. On approaching the players brake sharply and then dash to the red line. Then make a sharp turn and dash back to the boards. From there—to the blue line, and then again back to the boards. From there across the ice to the opposite goal.

For 12-13-year-olds it will be sufficient to skate this route once, while 15-year-olds, well-trained, can skate it twice.

Next exercise. Three against two. The centre forward passes the puck to the left wingman and dashes to the right flank, while the right wingman skates to the centre, trying to receive the puck and make it between the two defencemen. If the defencemen think of shifting to the centre beforehand, so as to catch the right

wingman there, they may be “penalised”: the forward, whom they “forgot”, may make a dash with the puck along the flank.

Another exercise. Three trios of the forwards try to score while each trio plays for itself. Meanwhile, the defencemen are engaged in their zone. Two pairs of defencemen play against each other with two pucks. The exercise helps the players to perfect their technique and to better orientate themselves on the ice.

A new exercise. The trio takes its station on the blue line. Wingers shoot two pucks against the face boards with the defencemen chasing the pucks and passing them to the forwards who by that time skate into the zone. Then the forwards skate forward and on their way “lose” one of the two pucks (this is done to make it more difficult for the defencemen to react), turn and attack three against two defencemen, who by that time have skated to the blue line.

An interesting exercise. One against five players.

A player cuts into a group of players without sticks and tries to make his way through the crowd retaining possession of the puck. This exercise helps to improve agility and the ability to stop sharply and start again.

The Snowman Tells His Story.

Sports Clubs

The Central Army Club

This Club is an unconditional and generally recognised leader of Soviet hockey.

The team has played in all the 33 country's championships and has scored outstanding successes. Twenty-two times its players became champions of the Soviet Union. Nine times they received silver and once in 1962—bronze. Only once this famous club failed to make the ranks of prize-winners.

No other hockey team has such an outstanding record.

The twenty-two-time champions won the USSR Cup ten times (again more than anyone else!).

The Central Army Club players who in 1969 for the first time took part in the European Champions Cup tournament won the title of the continent's strongest team on the very first attempt. The Club is six-time winner of the European Cup.

And, finally, one more prize—the Prize of the newspaper *Sovetsky Sport*, which is usually vied for at the beginning of the season. Army men received this prize eleven times.

At the end of February 1971 and at the very beginning of January 1972, the Inter-continental Cup was to be fought for at skating rinks in the United States. Invited to take part in the tournament were champions of the United States, a champion team from amateur Canadian teams and two leading European clubs—the Central Army Sports Club (USSR), and Dukla from the town of Jihlava (Czechoslovakia), finalists of the European Cham-

pions Cup. The Canadians failed to appear and it were Army men who won ahead of time the two-round "tournament of the three".

Finally at the close of 1975 and the beginning of 1976, the strongest professional ice hockey clubs of North America, the leading NHL clubs had the chance to test the Army Club's strength.

On December 28, 1975, an eight-round super-series began in New York opening with a match against the New York Rangers, in which the players of the Moscow Central Army Club and Krylya Sovetov club were pitted against the eight strongest NHL teams. In the first match the Soviet players routed the American team with the famous forward Phil Esposito. A few minutes before the final siren Muscovites led 7-1 and only at the very end of the encounter the hosts managed to score two "prestigious goals".

On New Year's eve the Soviet squad played against the famous Montreal Canadians, which several months later won the Stanley Cup. Montreal had such aces as Frank Mahovlich, Ken Dryden, Guy Lefleur, Yvan Courmoyer, Jacques Lemaire, Steve Shutt, Guy Lapointe, Serge Savard. The Canadians already learned how the Army Club played and how they should organise their game, while the Canadians remained a riddle for our players.

It was a dramatic encounter. It seemed that the guests were in for a drubbing, but the Army Club withstood the opponents'

onslaught and then went into an offensive drawing 3-3.

Several days later a new riddle—the famous Boston Bruins. And again the riddle was resolved—Army men won 5-2.

After three games the Central Army Club gleaned five points out of six and won its part of the super series ahead of time.

For the last game with the Philadelphia Flyers the Central Army Sports Club came to the ice without a number of players who had received injuries in the previous games—Petrov, Tsygankov, Zhlukov. The host team played so rough that, fearing for the players, our coaches called the team off the ice. After an interval, the game was resumed, however, all sporting interest had been lost. Philadelphia Flyers won 4-1, but even the most ardent of its fans blamed their team for rough play, for “anti-hockey”. The last match did not tell on the overall result of the super-series.

The Central Army Club men are proud not only of their awards and huge collection of prizes and titles, but most of all they are proud of those excellent masters who played under the team's banners for nearly a quarter of a century, of those forwards, defencemen and goaltenders who make up the glory and the pride of our hockey.

Statisticians have calculated that nearly sixty club's players have played for the Soviet national team over the years, more than 30 became world, European and Olympic champions. The history of the national sport is unthinkable without including the names of wonderful Army men.

Much has been written about the famous Army trio Evgeny Babich, Victor

Shuvalov and Vsevolod Bobrov. They were undoubted leaders of our hockey in the '50s and the strongest trio in the national squad.

But time was merciless and the three famous musketeers left the ice to become coaches. The sixties arrived and once again it was the Central Army Club players who set the tone of the national squad—Alexander Almetov's trio, in which ice hockey grand-master wingers Konstantin Loktev and Veniamin Alexandrov played. The 'A' trio, as it was called in the club and national team was the country's first trio.

Ice hockey is always on the move, developing, changing and improving. New stars come to replace the famous veterans.

The second half of the '60s. A new trio took the forefront of the country's national team—Vladimir Vikulov, Victor Polupanov and Anatoly Firsov. The legendary Firsov, the best player of the decade, and the two young forwards, masters, who continued the string of victories with outstanding playing skill.

There were new leaders waiting in the wings too—the next generation of players. The first trio of the Central Army Club and the national squad—Boris Mikhailov, Vladimir Petrov and Valery Kharlamov. Petrov and his team-mates set the tone at the eleven world championships receiving time and again the Three Bombardiers' Prize, given by the newspaper *Trud* editorial office—they have the greatest number of goals to their credit.

But they at the Central Army Club, as before, sought new ways of intensifying the attack. A new trio was formed in the autumn of 1971: Vladimir Vikulov, Anatoly Firsov and Valery Kharlamov. Three magnificent forwards were joined in

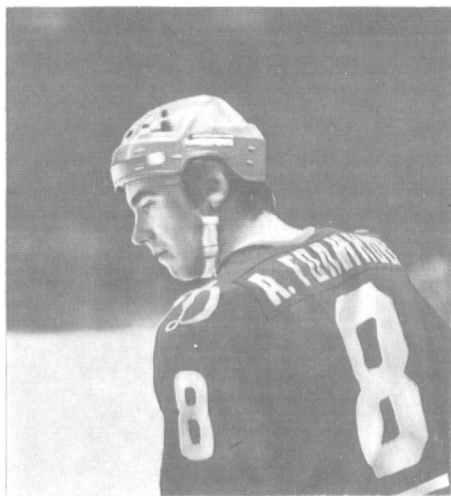
the team. From then on Firsov's five had become an undoubted leader of Soviet hockey.

Kharlamov returned to his trio and once again the trio Mikhailov, Petrov, Kharlamov knows no equals.

The Army Club wasn't famous for its forwards alone. For more than 25 years it has also had the country's best defencemen, who've been passing on their skills to younger team-mates. Nikolai Sologubov, Genrikh Sidorenkov, Dmitry Ukolov, Ivan Tregubov, Eduard Ivanov, Alexander Ragulin, Victor Kuzkin, Vladimir Brezhnev, Oleg Zaitsev, Igor Romishevsky, Vladimir Lutchenko, Genady Tsygankov, Vyacheslav Fetisov, Sergei Babinov, famous goal tenders Nikolai Puchkov and Vladislav Tretyak on more than one occasion became world and European champions and nearly all of them are Olympic champions.

While recalling the names of famous masters of the leading club we must not fail to name the coach who trained a brilliant galaxy of stars of world hockey. The Army men seventeen times became national champions under the coaching of Anatoly Tarasov. Nine times the national team led by Arkady Chernyshev and Anatoly Tarasov, won world championships.

The most famous club is an undoubted setter of fashion in the development and upgrading of ice hockey technique. The system of play "five in attack and five in defence", adopted by the players, "roaming defenceman" (this technical novelty allowed an increase in the forwards speed manoeuvrability, improved and diversified the interchanging of forwards with one of the defencemen), a new positioning of the players on the ice (the so-



A. Golikov

called "system" where a central defenceman, two halfbacks and two forwards replaced the traditional pair of defencemen)—are all tactical ideas developed by the Central Army Sports Club.

It was at this club that many a new form of training process saw light of day for the first time. That is perhaps why Army men have been in the lead more than a quarter of a century.

Today the team is headed by one of the best coaches—Viktor Tikhonov. From 1977 he has been the senior coach of the Soviet national team.

Dynamo (Moscow)

The Moscow Dynamo holds second place in the number of medals won in national championships. It has 28 awards (Army Club has 32). Twice the white-blue (that's how Dynamo players are often called in the press) were national champions—in 1947 and in 1954. Twelve times

they won silver medals and fourteen times—bronze.

In 1953, 1972 and 1976, Dynamo won the national Cup and its players were six times finalists in tournaments for this popular prize. Dynamo players were the winners of the 1976 tournament for the newspaper *Sovetsky Sport* Prize.

Dynamo and Central Army Club teams are the only two clubs which participated in all the national championships. On October 10, 1970, Dynamo was the first to play its 700th match in the national championships.

Dynamo is the oldest club which has been playing a leading role in the Soviet hockey for already a quarter of a century. The first national champion had its ups and downs but invariably its players fielded a team which all opponents had to reckon with. I will remind you that Central Army Club players suffered the most telling defeat in their history at the hands of Dynamo: in 1962 they lost to Dynamo 5-14.

"Chernyshev's team," that's how Dynamo players were justly called. This popular club was for more than a quarter of a century trained by Arkady Chernyshev, Merited Master of Sports, Merited Coach of the USSR and a holder of many governmental orders and awards, that same Chernyshev with whom many victories of Soviet players at world and Olympic championships have been connected: eleven times the Soviet national team, led by Chernyshev, won Cups for victories in the world championships and four times—gold Olympic medals.

Thanks to Arkady Chernyshev Dynamo has its own characteristic style, its own inimitable manner of play: precise, well-organised defence, a rational attack

pattern, speedy manoeuvres, and a desire to avoid risks.

In separate years the Dynamo Sports Club delegated 15 of its players—goaltenders, defencemen and forwards—to play for the national team.

A remarkable Dynamo trio—Valentin Kuzin, Alexei Uvarov and Yuri Krylov—played for the Soviet national team which made its debut at the White Olympics. In the decisive match with the Canadians the players of this trio scored twice.

Defenceman Davydov was undoubtedly the club's most outstanding player. He is nine-times world and three-times Olympic champion. In the history of world hockey only two other players can vie with the Dynamo captain in the number of top titles—Army man Alexander Ragulin and Spartak player Vyacheslav Starshinov.

Moscow Dynamo had at all times a brilliant ensemble of forwards, the brightest star of which is undoubtedly the talented Alexander Maltsev, the best forward of the 1970 and 1972 world championships.

Dynamo players won the Toronto Cup—an international tournament held in Finland—two years in succession.

In 1975, Dynamo won the Ahearne Cup, one of the most popular New Year tournaments staged in Sweden. The Dynamo squad left behind such strong clubs as Sparta from Czechoslovakia, Djurgården, AIK, Södertälje, Lexand from Sweden. A year later, at the beginning of 1976, the Muscovites repeated their success, this time winning all the matches from Sparta and from Swedish teams Södertälje, Djurgården, Hammarby and AIK.

The 1974-1975 season in the life of Dynamo was marked by an outstanding event—Soviet hockey veteran Arkady Chernyshev turned the coaching over to his talented pupil Vladimir Yurzinov.

The team again was on the upgrade. After a year's respite they returned to the prize-winning trio, demonstrating a striking and interesting game in that season. In the spring, at the close of the hockey season, Moscow Dynamo won a new victory by trouncing the Central Army Club in the final match. They also won the USSR Cup, the second tournament of importance for Soviet players.

Vladimir Yurzinov is one of the coaches of the national team.

Spartak (Moscow)

This team has a complicated story. After a successful debut in the very first championship (third place) and after taking second place in the next, Spartak retreated into the background and for a long time practically did not participate in the fight for the title of champions.

Only 14 years later Spartak men again became prize-winners capturing first place.

This was the birth of a new Spartak, a new squad which really claimed the highest awards. Ever since the red-and-whites (the colours of Moscow's most popular club) are invariably among the three leading teams and only twice—in 1971 and 1974 failed to take a prize-winning place.

The Spartak team is four-times champion of the USSR winner of six silver and six bronze medals. Twice Spartak men won the USSR Cup and twice the Prize of the newspaper *Sovetsky Sport*—third prize of importance in Soviet hockey.

The strongest teams from Finland (IFK), Czechoslovakia (Škoda, Plzen), USSR (Spartak), Sweden (AIK, Djurgården, Färjestaden and others) took part over the last few years in the Ahearn Cup New Year tournament in Sweden. Invariably Spartak captured first place.

In 1975, Spartak won another most popular international New Year tournament staged in Sweden—the Star Cup, capturing first place ahead of Swedish teams Brynäs and V. Frölunda and the Czechoslovak ZKL club.

Ivan Novikov, Zdenek Zigmund and Yuri Tarasov—these wonderful hockey masters—began their careers in Spartak. They were pioneers of Soviet hockey, trailblazing the way for the heroes of today's ice battles.

The trio, in which Boris Mayorov (left wing) and his brother Yevgeny (right wing) played together with centre-forward Vyacheslav Starshinov, was the most outstanding trio in the history of this Moscow club. For many years this trio adorned the national team and was in fact the beacon, the reference point against which several generations of young Spartak players measured their mastery.

One could speak at length about the skill of Boris Mayorov or Vyacheslav Starshinov, recall the goals they scored clinching the outcome of most important matches, but their main merit lies, undoubtedly, in the fact that they managed to instill in the entire team their energy, their belief in success and managed to lead their team-mates forward. The Spartak men, who for many seasons stayed in the shadow, came to believe that they, too, could vie for gold.

Starshinov's trio led the team. At times they spent on the ice twice as much time as

their comrades when the team was short-handed. Each one of them fought vigorously and if the fans spoke about the "Spartak spirit", about the ability not to give up, they meant, above all, the attitude of the first trio.

Such famous players as Yevgeny Zimin, Alexander Yakushev, Victor Zinger, Vladimir Shadrin, Alexander Martynyuk, Yevgeny Poladyev, Victor Shalimov grew up and matured with them—15 Spartak players played in different years for the national team...

Today Spartak occupies a firm place along the leading Soviet clubs.

Now Spartak is headed by Boris Kulagin, who coached the Central Army Sports Club and Krylya Sovetov.

Krylya Sovetov (Moscow)

The country's oldest sports club, it played more than 700 matches in national championships. It made its debut in the second national championship in the winter of 1947-1948.

The team won the USSR championship in 1957 and 1974. In 1955, 1956, 1958 and 1975 the team won silver and seven times bronze.

In 1951 and 1974, Krylya Sovetov won the USSR Cup and made the European Champion's Cup.

Its history was a difficult one. Lucky victorious seasons were replaced by years of misfortunes. The team dropped to eighth place in the tournament table and for 12 years this trade-union collective could not make a place among the prize-winners.

It came into limelight again in the second half of the '50s, when such players as defenceman Alfred Kuchevsky and the

famous trio—Nikolai Khlystov, Alexei Guryshv and Mikhail Bychkov—all world and Olympic champions, played for the team. This trio was part of the national team and was rightly considered one of the best in Soviet hockey. Khlystov, Guryshv and Bychkov played in the national team in the years when the legendary Army men Babich, Shuvalov and Bobrov made up the first trio.

Alexei Guryshv left the ice many years ago but the scoring record this forward set was beaten only in 1972. Guryshv netted 379 goals in the country's championships and it was only another famous champion—Vyacheslav Starshinov—who managed to top this achievement.

Vladimir Petrov who is playing for the Central Army Sports Club today, began his career in the Krylya Sovetov team.

For many years the team was coached by Vladimir Yegorov, Merited Coach of the USSR.

In the last few years the performance of the team has noticeably changed for the better. In the 1971/72 season Merited Coach of the USSR Boris Kulagin, who for many years coached the Central Army Club together with Tarasov, took the team over.

In the spring of 1972, Krylya Sovetov captured fourth place in the national championship. In 1973, the team made the prize trio and a year later, after a 17-year interval, they became champions of the USSR.

The team's players Vyacheslav Anisin, Yuri Lebedev, Sergei Kapustin, Alexander Sidelnikov, Yuri Shatalov, Victor Kuznetsov, Vladimir Repnev and Yuri Tyurin became world champions, while Kapustin, Sidelnikov and Sergei Babinov—Olympic champions.

From 1974 to 1977, Krylya Sovetov's coach Boris Kulagin headed the country's national squad.

The team confidently holds its place among the country's strongest and together with the Central Army Club it was entrusted with the right to represent Soviet hockey in the super series of matches playing against the strongest NHL clubs.

Muscovites played the first match against Pittsburgh Penguins. The Soviet players made a brilliant start winning the first period 4-0. Then the game evened out somewhat, but, nevertheless, our team won with a big margin 6-2.

Its second match was a flop. The opponents from the Buffalo Sabres, taking advantage of our goalie's uncertain play, trounced it 12-6.

However, in the next encounter with the famous Chicago Black Hawks Soviet players were above all praise. Although the Chicago club had many famous players in its line-up—goaltender Tony Esposito, forwards Stan Mikita, Dennis Hull, the American team practically had no chance to contain the mighty onslaught of the Soviet team, which won 4-2.

Krylya Sovetov ended the series in the city where the Central Army Club began—New York—playing against New York Islanders and again winning 2-1.

Winning six points out of eight, Krylya Sovetov, just like Army team, won its part of the super-series.

Air Force Club

The team ceased its existence in 1953, nevertheless, the history of the Soviet hockey will be incomplete if we do not recall the Air Force team—three-times champions of the USSR.

The team took part in the first national tournament. In that season Anatoly Tarasov, the most effective player in the first championship, who subsequently became the leading Army club coach, played for the Air Force team. In 1958, the team was disbanded and its players transferred to the Central Army Club.

The Army Sports Club (Leningrad)

The Army Sports Club—from the banks of the Neva River is the fifth (after Dynamo, Central Army Sports Club, Krylya Sovetov and Spartak) to have more than 700 games to its credit.

After the Army Sports Club made its debut it had to leave the company of the strongest teams for three years, but beginning with the 1950/51 season the Leningrad Army men invariably participated in the matches of the country's leading hockey clubs.

At that time the team played far from the first violin and only in 1954 and in 1956 Leningraders climbed the fourth rung in the tournament table. In other seasons they took the sixth, seventh, eighth and even ninth places. In 1970s, the team began its climb upwards, capturing fourth place. In 1971, Leningraders for the first time in their history captured bronze. Now the top teams played in Leningrad with caution—Leningraders were especially strong at home.

The Spengler Cup, which the leading clubs of several countries vied for in Switzerland, landed for good on the banks of the Neva River. In the last few years the champions of Czechoslovakia Dukla, the champions of Switzerland, a team from the town of Chaux de Fonds, Swedish club MoDo, Düsseldorf from the FRG and Davos, one of the oldest clubs in Eur-

ope, took part in these tournaments. Nevertheless, Leningraders confidently won the Spengler Cup.

Young players made a good showing and a goalie and a trio of Leningraders went to Canada to play in the national team while Sergei Solodukhin, Army club forward, went to Prague to participate in the world championships.

All the specialists, journalists, and sportsmen explain, as a rule, the success of the Army team in very much the same way—Nikolai Puchkov, Merited Master of Sports and the team's coach, works in an interesting and fruitful way. He was the first Soviet goaltender to receive the prize of the best at world championships. A skilled player, he became an excellent coach.

Khimik (Voskresensk)

All the clubs we wrote of so far represented city giants: Moscow and Leningrad. Big-Time hockey, however, also came to the small town of Voskresensk in the Moscow Region. The team of the Voskresensk Chemical Mill climbed up the hockey ladder (taking the first step at the Moscow Region championships) until, finally, it made the top league. It happened in 1957 and ever since Khimik participated in all national tournaments.

Voskresensk sent to the national team, among others, defenceman Yuri Lyapkin, participant of world championships in Bern (1970), Geneva (1971), Prague (1972). Up to the spring of 1976, Yuri played for the Moscow Spartak and then returned to his old team. In 1976, Alexander and Vladimir Golikov played in the national team at the world championship.

Khimik is a team with an inimitable creative trait of its own: its play principles are different from those of other top league teams. For many years its main concern was the safety of the goal and, therefore, it based its offensive on counter-attacks—Khimik brought the art of sudden punitive counter-attack, catching the opponent unawares, to perfection.

If previously Voskresensk kept to defensive tactics organised in such a way that the most daring forwards became bogged down in the depth of its defence, lately, while still showing concern for the impregnability of its defence, Khimik began to show more imaginative offensive and talented forwards appeared in the team.

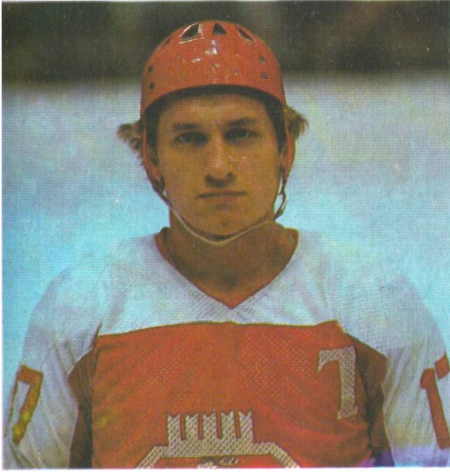
When we spoke about the Central Army Sports Club, Dynamo, Krylya Sovetov, the Army Sports Club in Leningrad, we mentioned the great role of coaches A. Tarasov, A. Chernyshev, V. Yegorov, B. Kulagin, N. Puchkov. Nikolai Epshtein, Merited Coach of the USSR, specialist, teacher and organiser, has made a notable contribution into the creation, establishment and flowering of Khimik.

In 1974, Khimik won the Star Cup in Sweden. Its players left behind such Swedish clubs as Brynäs, Västerås, V. Frölunda, the Czechoslovak team from the city of Litvinov and the Canadian club Orillia Terriers.

In 1976, Voskresensk team won the Cup of the Ontario Province in Canada.

Tractor (Chelyabinsk)

The Chelyabinsk team played in the cohort of the country's leading clubs for 23 seasons. Tractor was the finalist in the



A. Skvortsov

1973 national Cup and won the bronze in the 1977 national championship.

Regretfully, the team cannot retain its composition permanently—at different times there were quite a few talented players in the team, but nearly all of them sooner or later transferred to other more stronger teams. Among them were V. Shuvalov, who later played for the Air Force club and the Central Army Sports Club in one trio with E. Babich and V. Bobrov, V. Devyatov and K. Kotlov, who transferred to Moscow Dynamo and made up a trio together with A. Sevidov, which was considered to be one of the most effective. Chelyabinsk produced such world champions as Sergei Makarov, Sergei Babinov and Sergei Starikov.

For some time the team's play was based on the two principles—high speed and excellent physical fitness. With time, the Tractor coaches V. Stolyarov and A. Kostryukov managed to boost the team's technical and tactical skill consid-

erably and players began to show more creativeness. These changes struck hope in the hearts of its fans.

In 1976, Tractor won the Star Cup in Sweden, beating all rivals—Czechoslovak Slovan and Swedish clubs Brynäs and V. Frölunda.

Torpedo (Gorky)

Torpedo team made its unsuccessful debut in Big-Time hockey in 1953. It made its next appearance two seasons later when it took tenth place. Ever since Torpedo has been participant in national tournaments.

Torpedo like Tractor cannot take pride in its record. More often than not the team occupied a place on the second half of the table—from 6th to 9th place.

Only once Torpedo players managed to get among prize-winners. It happened in 1961 when Torpedo won silver with the many-year leaders of national hockey, the Central Army Sports Club, finishing ahead of them.

In 1961, Torpedo men were successful vying for the national Cup. They made the finals in the most popular competition where they eventually lost to Moscow Army men in decisive battles (at that time the finals consisted of a series of matches—the teams played until one of the clubs scored three wins). In 1960, Torpedo won the newspaper *Sovetsky Sport* Prize.

A typically average team, it can unexpectedly show teeth and snatch a point or two from a favourite squad. Torpedo team plays particularly well at home. On its own stadium they thrashed such teams as Central Army, Dynamo and Spartak. But their victories are episo-

dical and infrequent, resounding successes are followed by a no less resounding series of setbacks.

A saying came from Canada, the birthplace of hockey, that the goalie is half the team. In our hockey for a long time this thought was not considered obvious and masters of the older generation admitted it on more than one occasion.

At the beginning of the '60s, however, these words came to the fore. A team appeared in the national line-up which owed at least half of its successes to its goaltender. I repeat, at least half! We speak of Gorky Torpedo and its goalie Victor Konovalenko.

"He's like a wall! An impenetrable wall!" we thought when we watched Konovalenko defend his goal. Leading players of our national team were of the same opinion. Victor defended the goals of the two teams—Torpedo and the National—for eleven seasons. He is a Merited Master of Sports, eight-times world and twice Olympic champion. In the spring of 1970 sports journalists named him the country's best player.

The successful performance of the Torpedo team is unthinkable without Konovalenko. He became the team's symbol and spirit.

Gorky townspeople are rightly proud of their townsman.

Torpedo has quite a few talented and interesting players. Defenceman Yuri Fedotov became world champion in 1975 and 1978 and the team's fans were expecting that someone of the young players will pick up the baton of highest mastery and that Gorky will in future be represented in the Soviet national team.

These expectations came true: in 1979, Alexander Skvortsov became world

champion. The trio of the team—Skvortsov, Kovin and Varnakov—made an excellent show playing on the national squad in the Challenge Cup matches in the United States.

In 1974, Torpedo players won the Polar Cup, one of the most popular New Year tournaments staged in Sweden, beating Swedish clubs Björklöven, Skelleftea, Boden, MoDo and the Canadian team Mohawks.

Lokomotiv (Moscow)

This railwaymen's club entered the fight for the champion's title for the first time in 1950. It disappeared from sight for several years and only after six seasons once again joined the main competitions.

In 1961, Lokomotiv scored its highest success winning bronze. The team time and again won an honourable fourth place.

For some years the team was coached by Anatoly Kostyukov, Merited Coach of the USSR.

The club delegated to the national team such players as N. Snetkov, V. Yakushev and V. Tsyplakov. V. Yakushev, the best forward in the team, became five-times world and once Olympic champion.

Tsyplakov scored 320 goals playing for his club. It is the fourth result in the history of Soviet hockey.

Regretfully, in the spring of 1972 after it came last on the table, Lokomotiv had to leave the top league. Now the team had to begin again, fighting for the right to take its place among the strongest clubs.

Sibir (Novosibirsk)

Siberian hockey emerged on the national scene for the first time in 1954: it

was a Novosibirsk Army team that began its road to the top. Then Novosibirsk was represented by the Dynamo team. But this club, too, failed to make an impression. Then Siberians delegated its team Sibir to the national competition, but, regretfully, it made poor showing. The tenth or eleventh place was the permanent level of Sibir's performances at the national championships. Because today only ten clubs make up the top league, Novosibirsk players had to move out.

The hopes of the team heightened when the experienced Nikolai Epshtein, who coached Khimik (Voskresensk) before, came to Sibir.

Avtomobilist (Sverdlovsk)

Ice hockey fans are familiar with this team, although in the last few seasons it played in the first league of the "A" class. They know it because they well remember what a stir the team caused when, in 1969, it captured fifth place in the national championship. It beat such experienced clubs as Torpedo of Gorky, Lokomotiv of Moscow, Tractor of Chelyabinsk, Lenin-grad Army Sports Club and also country's champion in one of the matches with 6-0! Never before Central Army Club had suffered such a formidable defeat. Even in the most sad defeat in their history at the hands of Dynamo players when the score was 5-14, the correlation of goals was not so disgraceful.

Avtomobilist had a predecessor—Spartak from Sverdlovsk, which made its debut in the 1956 season without noticeable success. Then the team was renamed Avtomobilist, but this had no telling effect on the quality of the team's game. As before, Avtomobilist couldn't

make the top ten. Then in 1969, Avtomobilist players astounded the sporting world. However, a year later they again retreated to their former positions—to the second tenth.

Avtomobilist sent to the national team its goalie Puchkov, who won the titles of world and European champion at the 1969 World Championship in Stockholm.

In the 1972-1973 season Avtomobilist once more played in the top league.

Dynamo (Riga)

This team only recently joined the ranks of the strongest teams after a swift beginning.

At one time, in the first postwar years, Riga players were rightly considered to be the country's strongest, but they gradually yielded their positions.

The team began its ascent to former glory when Victor Tikhonov took over the coaching. For many years he worked as a second coach in Moscow Dynamo. Chernyshev's school groomed Tikhonov into a first-class specialist.

Dynamo (Riga) has taken a place in the top league and firmly keeps its place in the middle of the tournament table holding an honourable fifth place behind the four Moscow teams. The Muscovites regard Riga players with caution. At times the Central Army Club, Spartak, Dynamo and Krylya Sovetov have to yield three of four points out of the eight to this team, while the defeat of one of the leaders in Riga is no longer regarded as a sensation.

Riga's best forward Helmut Balderis (now the Central Army Club player), became world champion in 1978 and 1979. In January 1976, Dynamo captured in Sweden the traditional Polar Cup, winning all the matches.

The Prizes of the Big-Time Hockey

The Newspaper *Izvestia* Prize

This prize awarded to the country's most effective striker has an interesting history.

When founding the prize, the editorial office declared that it would be awarded to a player who scored the greatest number of goals in all the official tournaments—national, as well as in the USSR Cup, and the *Sovetsky Sport* tournament matches, world and European championships and also at the Brown Memorial Tournament in Colorado Springs, USA.

This format continued for three years. Then the Prize's founders began to count only the goals scored at the Soviet national championships, and, beginning with 1970 the most effective scorer was determined as it is accepted at world championships—only the goals and the assists, which led to a goal, were counted.

Three Bombardiers Prize

This prize was founded by the newspaper *Trud* on the eve of the 1970/71 season and was awarded to the best trio. The Central Army Club trio—Boris Mikhailov, Vladimir Petrov and Valery Kharlamov—became the first winner of the new prize. They scored more than any other trio—88 (32 + 16 + 40). The Dynamo trio, in which Yuri Chichurin and Anatoly Belonozhkin played together with Alexander Maltsev had 77 goals to their credit.

Next year three trios contended for the prize—Vladimir Vikulov, Anatoly Firsov and Valery Kharlamov from the Central Army Club, their team-mates Boris Mikhailov, Vladimir Petrov and Yuri Blinov and, finally, Anatoly Motovilov, Alexander Maltsev and Yuri Chichurin of Dynamo.

The prize went to Firsov's trio which considerably outstripped all other contenders. Vikulov, Firsov and Kharlamov scored 78 goals (34 + 18 + 26).

In 1973, Spartak men captured the prize—Alexander Martynyuk, Vladimir Shadrin and Alexander Yakushev—scoring 72 goals (22 + 24 + 26).

The year after Krylya Sovetov men became the country's champions, the prize went to its trio—Yuri Lebedev, Vyacheslav Anisin and Alexander Bodunov—scored 64 goals (22 + 22 + 20).

A year later the Central Army Club—Boris Mikhailov, Valery Kharlamov and Vladimir Petrov—trio was the most resultative scoring 60 goals (18 + 27 + 15).

In the next season, in the spring of 1976, it was the Spartak trio that turned out to be the best—Victor Shalimov, Vladimir Shadrin and Alexander Yakushev—scoring 76 goals (28 + 31 + 7).

In 1977, Moscow Dynamo men—Pyotr Prirodin, Alexander Maltsev and Alexander Golikov—won the prize with their 78 goals (23 + 31 + 24). In 1978 again, it was the Central Army Club trio—Mikhailov, Petrov, Kharlamov—that came on top

with the same 78 goals scored by Dynamo men a year before. In the next season the tense duel of these two trios ended with the Dynamo trio coming on top—brothers Alexander and Vladimir Golikovs and Pyotr Prirodin scored 82 goals.

The Best Player of the Season

In the spring of 1968, the *Football-Hockey* weekly circulated a questionnaire among journalists who wrote about hockey seeking views as to the best player of the season.

It was suggested that the 51 reviewer and sports photo-correspondents name the three strongest players. Three points were given for first place, two for second and one for third.

Anatoly Firsov was named the best player of the season.

Journalists put him 38 times first, 10—second and three times—third. The Central Army Club striker received 137 points considerably leaving behind all competitors.

Vyacheslav Starshinov was second with 84 points and Victor Konovalenko third (49 points).

In the spring of 1969, 55 hockey reviewers again named Anatoly Firsov the best player of the season. He bagged 68 points.

In 1970, the leaders changed. 68 journalists named Victor Konovalenko, Gorky Torpedo goalie, the best player of

the season. He gleaned 124 points, 20 more than Alexander Maltsev who was second.

1971. Once again the country's journalists named Anatoly Firsov with 134 points the best player of the season. As four years ago he again considerably surpassed all other contenders for the title of the player No. 1.

Firsov's partners on the national team Vladimir Vikulov and Alexander Maltsev were given 70 points each. But since Vikulov had more first places (15) than Maltsev (8), he was awarded second place.

The year of 1972 was special in the history of determining the best player by journalists. The sympathies of sports journalists were divided. Sixty of them decided that there should be two laureates. They became Alexander Maltsev (Dynamo) and Valery Kharlamov (Central Army Sports Club)—they bagged 130 points each.

In the spring of 1973, Valery Kharlamov became the sole winner of the contest.

Then came the "Tretyak era". Three years in a row—1974, 1975 and 1976—the goaltender of the Central Army Club and of the national team Vladislav Tretyak was named the best player of the season.

In 1977, it was Helmut Balderis, Dynamo (Riga) who was voted the best player and in 1978 and 1979—Boris Mikhailov, Central Army Club (Moscow).

LAUREATES OF SOVIET HOCKEY (FROM THE SNOWMAN'S ARCHIVES)

	National champion	Second championships' prize-winner	Third championships' prize-winner	USSR Cup winner
1947	Dynamo	Central Army Club	Spartak	—
1948	Central Army Sports Club	Spartak	Dynamo	—
1949	Central Army Sports Club	Air Force Club	Dynamo	—
1950	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Krylya Sovetov	—
1951	Air Force Club	Dynamo	Krylya Sovetov	Krylya Sovetov
1952	Air Force Club	Central Army Club	Dynamo	Air Force Club
1953	Air Force Club	Central Army Club	Dynamo	Dynamo
1954	Dynamo	Central Army Club	Krylya Sovetov	Central Army Club
1955	Central Army Sports Club, Moscow Region	Krylya Sovetov	Dynamo	Central Army Sports Club, Moscow Region
1956	Central Army Sports Club, Moscow Region	Krylya Sovetov	Dynamo	Central Army Sports Club, Moscow Region
1957	Krylya Sovetov	Central Army Sports Club, Moscow Region	Dynamo	—
1958	Central Army Sports Club, Moscow Region	Krylya Sovetov	Dynamo	—
1959	Central Army Sports Club, Moscow Region	Dynamo	Krylya Sovetov	—
1960	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Krylya Sovetov	—
1961	Central Army Sports Club	Torpedo	Lokomotiv	Central Army Sports Club
1962	Spartak	Dynamo	Central Army Sports Club	—
1963	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Spartak	—
1964	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Spartak	—

Year	National champion	Second championships' prize-winner	Third championships' prize-winner	USSR Cup winner
1965	Central Army Sports Club	Spartak	Khimik	—
1966	Central Army Sports Club	Spartak	Dynamo	Central Army Sports Club
1967	Spartak	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Central Army Sports Club
1968	Central Army Sports Club	Spartak	Dynamo	Central Army Sports Club
1969	Spartak	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Central Army Sports Club
1970	Central Army Sports Club	Spartak	Khimik	Spartak
1971	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Leningrad Army Sports Club	Spartak
1972	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Spartak	Dynamo
1973	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Spartak	Central Army Sports Club
1974	Krylya Sovetov	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Krylya Sovetov
1975	Central Army Sports Club	Krylya Sovetov	Spartak	—
1976	Spartak	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Dynamo
1977	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Traktor	Dynamo
1978	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Krylya Sovetov	—
1979	Central Army Sports Club	Dynamo	Spartak	Central Army Sports Club

Physical Fitness That Wins the Day

On a particular evening the two teams practically matched one another. The match was tense. Now one team took a lead, now another. It was difficult to predict the winner. However, in the third period when the opponents changed goals, one of the clubs sharply petered out. The players were not quick enough to help each other, they fell behind, chasing opponents across the ice and became less attentive in their goal area. The result of the game was there for everyone to see: three pucks flew into their net.

The TV commentator explained:

“Obviously, the players got tired... They didn’t have enough strength...”

Yes, this sometimes happens in ice hockey.

No matter how good a player is at bypassing, no matter how accurate he is, all these assets, very important indeed, for victory are still not enough. A player’s success, young players included, largely depends on strength, endurance, stamina, speed and agility.

Physical fitness and the player’s athletic qualities determine to a large extent his possibilities in executing any technical or tactical action. A strong and sturdy player can send a puck with a great force and body-check effectively. If a player has a lot of endurance, he will keep up a high pace in the game during the entire match. Speed, agility and other physical qualities are also important. That is why a young player must first of all pay attention to physical fitness.

In ice hockey as in any other sport it is a physically fit athlete who wins. The one who is stronger, with more endurance and speed. These qualities are needed not only in sport.

Strength

Strength is one of the most important athletic qualities. The player will need it when skating, shooting and tackling. It greatly affects speed and is very important in developing agility.

Exercises with weights and dumb-bells are very good for developing strength. It can also be developed on the rink. But to strengthen feet muscles one has to skate many scores of kilometres and to strengthen one’s arms—shoot a puck thousands of times. While exercising with dumb-bells, you can considerably speed the processes of strength accumulation.

Exercise with dumb-bells in quick tempo (but not in maximum), so that besides developing strength and endurance the activity of the cardio-vascular and respiratory system was also stimulated. Inhale deeply with each successive movement.

Exercise together with your partner. For instance, crouch or walk about carrying your partner on your shoulders, bend your foot while your partner holds it, do push-ups.

Exercises imitating skating with dumb-bells or with an expander, or executing shots with a stick to which a weight is tied,

are useful to develop extra strength. The main principle of these exercises is to execute specifically hockey movements in more difficult conditions, so as to give the main load to those groups of muscles which do the main work during the game.

Speed

The player's speed depends on the speed of his reaction, on the speed of his movements and their frequency. These basic speed components are very important for hockey, this game of high speeds echoing our epoch, where everything is based on swift attacks, sudden lunges, stops and accelerations.

The speed of movements and lightning reactions are of great importance not only in hockey but in everyday life, too, when you encounter situations demanding prompt decisions.

There are several methods of developing your speed of reaction. A good way is to learn to respond to sudden signals. For instance, players skating in one direction must, at a whistle, change the direction of their skating. It must be remembered that the speed of reaction is improved only if your muscles are slightly toughened. The game with two or more pucks is useful to develop your attentiveness.

Maximum speed which a man can develop in this or that movement depends not only on his speed of reaction but also on the degree of development of other qualities: strength, flexibility and his technical arsenal. Therefore, the development of speed is closely linked with the development of other physical properties.

Any movement if repeated with weights (for instance, skating with belt filled with



Boris Mikhailov

sand) can be executed much faster without them.

In the same way the player's speed increases as he perfects his skill.

Speed can be developed not only during hockey season on the ice but also in the summer. Short spurts with maximum speed (15-30 m.), running down an incline while changing direction, starts from different positions, etc., are of great help.

Playing basketball, football and tennis can be very useful.

Boris Mikhailov, Merited Master of Sports, many-times world and twice Olympic champion, shares his secrets.

I regard quickness of reaction and speed the most important assets of modern hockey. Today everything must be done quickly: starting, skating, passing and handling the puck and shooting at the goal. But the most important thing is to think on the ice. To find the best decision in a flash and execute it immediately.

The speed of reaction so important for a player must be developed from childhood. It is also very important to freely and easily control the puck and to skate without difficulty.

At training sessions all the hockey elements must be executed not in static positions but while moving, accelerating to the maximum, even if you lose a puck while doing it.

Zealous execution of all the exercises at high speed and regular participation in all important matches, where a player is given a task of playing at top speed, is the way of improving one's mastery.

Endurance

In hockey endurance means to maintain a high pace while you are on the ice all through the game and from the start to the end of the season.

Hockey is the game of high speed. That is why not only general endurance is important here but also speed endurance.

Cross-country races, skiing, swimming, cycling, rowing, football and basketball are very good for the development of general endurance. One of the most important means of developing it is alternate running (for instance, 30-40 m.—slowly, 10-15 m.—quickly, once again 30-40 m.—slowly and 10-15 m.—quickly).

Speed or special endurance is developed all throughout the season, including during the matches.

It is recommended to play games during training sessions either shorthanded or against stronger players, or without replacing players for two or three shifts against trios that keep changing or playing on a rink larger in size.

There are several forms of developing endurance on ice.

First—to conduct training sessions at the same intensity and for the same time as during a match game: playing three 15-minute periods (for under 14-year-olds) or 20-minute periods (for over 15-year-olds). This training yields good results at the initial stages of training.

Second—to increase the length of a training game as compared with a regular match (for instance, playing three periods lasting not 20 minutes but 25-30). This form of training teaches the player to save up his energy and to be able to relax.

Third—to increase the intensity of the study and training sessions as compared with a competition, but at the same time to increase the number of rest spells or to make them longer. You can play, for instance, with four trios instead of three, thus increasing rest spells, or play in shorter shifts of 30-40 seconds, or play periods 6×10 minutes instead of 3×20 minutes (thus increasing the number of intervals).

Agility

Agility is a complex quality. It is, first of all, the ability to master quickly new and unaccustomed movements and, secondly, it is the ability quickly to alter your actions to correspond with changing situations.

The main road of developing one's agility is to master new, diversified movement skills. Therefore, other sports are of great help in developing agility. If you do gymnastic and acrobatic exercises, run cross-country races, do long and high jumping, swim, play football, basketball, volleyball, tennis, handball you are sure to improve your game. This is not surprising. Engaging in various sports you master new elements, your muscles become more and more pliable and the coordination of your movement improves.

Hockey players very often play basketball and football using body-checking, or sometimes play basketball using two balls—playing football with one and bas-



How to make yourself stronger

ketball with another. These exercises help develop attention, reaction, agility and coordination which are so essential in hockey.

Several most diverse exercises can be recommended during training on the ice to develop the players' agility.

For instance, the player can take up, at the start of an exercise, an unusual position (to stand with one's back to the direc-

tion of skating, or take up an inconvenient position when shooting). One can grip the stick in an inconvenient manner (with one's left hand gripping the end of the stick instead of the right, or vice versa), to play on the rink smaller in size, to learn most difficult elements of play, etc.

Exercises aimed at developing agility quickly tire a player. Therefore, they must be alternated with other exercises.

Flexibility

Flexibility is an ability of a player to execute movements with a great amplitude. Flexibility depends on the elasticity of muscles and ligaments. It can be developed to a maximum by 15-16. Therefore, it is best to begin developing flexibility from the very first training sessions.

To develop flexibility use exercises with an increased amplitude of oscillation (stretching exercises): multiple swings with your feet and arms, bends to different sides. The flexibility of a spine, especially of the chest, hip-bones and shoulder joints are of great importance. Flexibility of other joints is also of importance for a player: elbow, radiocarpal, knee, shin as well as loin. Youngsters must never try to do exercises which are too difficult for them. This concerns especially the development of strength and endurance.

Alexei Vasilyev, formerly doctor to the national squad, shares his secrets.

Sport does not tolerate lazy, weak-willed people. Success in sport begins with overcoming oneself.

A young athlete must begin his day with morning exercises. One can always set aside 15-20 minutes for physical jerks. Exercises developing flexibility as well as respiratory ones are very beneficial. It's good to take them out in the fresh air. Begin morning exercises with light jogging.

Strict hours should be set for home assignments, training sessions, breakfast, dinner and supper.

It is best of all to dine about three-four hours before the training session. But if you have to train an hour or two after your dinner then it mustn't be too hearty.

How to rest? Naturally, don't spend all your day on a couch. Academician Petrov used to say that the best rest is to alternate your occupations. An outing on skis in winter, a hike in summer are the best way of resting. The main thing is to be outside as long as you can.

All our players strictly observe their daily regime. Therefore, they manage to do every-

thing—study, work and train. It's not for nothing that many-times world champions Boris Mayorov, Konstantin Loktev, Vyacheslav Starshinov, Vladislav Tretyak, Vladimir Petrov and others have graduated from various institutes. They became teachers, engineers. Some of them are working on their candidate's papers. As you see, hockey did not prevent them from finding their place in life, on the contrary, it helped them to do so. It helped them because it taught them to overcome difficulties and to use time sparingly.

Now a few words about hygiene. Take a shower after each training session or wash yourself with a warm water and soap. Always keep your body clean because dirty skin leads to the appearance of boils and purulent pimples. Dust and sweat block the pores of your skin and impede its breathing as well as disturbing the metabolism of your body.

Dry your hockey boots after training session. When playing in the open, place felt liners in your boots. They will prevent your feet from frost-bite.

Now a few words about the tempering of your body. Usefulness of the tempering of a player's organism is obvious. A molly-coddle has no place on the ice, but it is not everyone who knows how to temper his body. Some of the boys decide: from today on I'll temper my body! They go and douse themselves with a whole bucketfull of ice water. In the evening they have a running nose... And they call it tempering.

There's very little benefit from this kind of tempering. Remember a wise procedure—go step by step.

Begin tempering in summer. Do your morning exercises and train out in the open in any weather. Your organism will get used to sharp temperature changes and a real athlete will be oblivious of cold even in winter. Begin with rubbing your body with a wet towel. Then start washing yourself down to your waist with cold water. When you get used to it—stand under the shower. But again start with room temperature, gradually lowering it.

Cold foot baths are very beneficial. Pour cold water into a tub or a bath (start with room temperature) and lower your feet into it, first for one minute, next time for two, then for five and so on. Increase the time and lower the temperature of the water. Take these baths before bed time.

Some of the boys often suffer from angina and catarrh of the upper respiratory tracts. I advice them to do the following: take some cold water in the palm of your hand and suck



General physical training is a must for a player

it through your nose, then let it out again through your nose. Repeat several times. It is a very good preventive measure.

A doctor and a coach are your tutors watching after your health. Turn to them for advice and strictly keep to the following two rules: do not attend a training session if you feel unwell, when you feel inertness and have bad appetite and sleep badly. Make sure to consult your coach or your doctor, do not hide your condition from them.

Hockey players are a courageous, staunch and a proud lot. A real fighter will never whimper from some scratch or a bruise. He will never let you know that it hurts him. However, it will never do to play with serious traumas. See your doctor in the event of any injury.

Draw up a daily regime for yourself and keep strictly to it.

Assignments for Self-Training

Here are several exercises which can be included into the plan of your training sessions.

Fitness session should last 40 minutes. The training session usually begins with a good warm-up at a good pace. Then exercises with weights. Crouch, jump up, make feints and accelerations, imitate dribbling the puck with dumb-bells in your hands.

Next exercise. Crouching while holding your partner on your shoulders. He must practically be of the same weight as you. Six series of six crouchings. First with your partner on your shoulders, then vice versa. Twelve exercises.

Another exercise. Push-ups while clapping your hands. Push off forcefully, clap your hands, land, then again push off and clap once more. Twenty times.

An exercise for your abdomen muscles. Best of all do it on wall bars. In a hang, raise your feet to the level of your belt. If you don't have wall bars, sit down on the floor, lift your feet up and cross them a few times.

Crouching in pairs with your backs to each other. One player crouches on both feet and the other one—on one. Then vice versa.

Speed acrobatics. A lunge, forward roll, lunges to different sides. Each player may have his own movements differing from the others; it is very important for the players to orient themselves properly in a flow of players, so as not to collide with your mates.

Imitating skating. With your partner piggyback-riding. With accelerations and holding dumb-bells.

Accelerating downhill. Running downhill. Mincing steps. This exercise will help increase your speed.

The session ends in a hockey game. If the session is not conducted on ice, try to play an unusual game: football-basketball. The game is held on a basketball pitch with two balls—football and basketball. The points are given for each scoring either into the cage or between the two basketball posts.

But do not divide the players into two teams, when one of them plays basketball and other—football.

It would be a good thing to include into your training sessions cross-country running, skiing and swimming—it all depends on the time of the year and weather.

You can think up many more interesting exercises which will help the players become strong, agile, fast and enduring.

The Snowman Tells His Story. IIHL Laureates

On the last day of each world and European championship the International Ice Hockey League and the championship's directorate name the three best players—goaltender, defenceman and forward. Only once during the 1971 tournament, which was held on the rinks of Bern and Geneva, four players were named laureates.

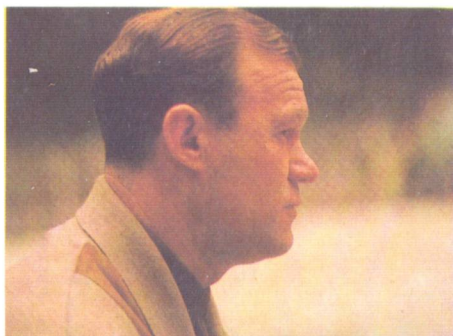
There are practically no arguments in naming the best goalie and forward (Czechoslovak goaltender Jiří Holoček and the Soviet forward Anatoly Firsov were practically beyond competition), but a lively discussion flared up when deciding who was the best defenceman. Ilpo Koskela from Finland or Jan Suchy from Czechoslovakia? The leaders of International Ice Hockey League voted three times and all the three times both Koskela and Suchy gained five votes. So, the prizes went to both defencemen. In 1979, however, the IIHL named six best players of the world and European championship.

In 1971, Anatoly Firsov won the prize awarded to the best forward of world championship for the third time. Previously he was named the best at the 1967 tournament in Vienna, and in 1968 in

Grenoble. Firsov thus came up with a hat trick repeating the record of defenceman Nikolai Sologubov, who received prizes in Cortina d'Ampezzo at the 7th Olympic Games (1956), at the 1957 World Championship in Moscow and at the 8th Olympic Games in Squaw Valley (1960).

Besides Firsov and Sologubov the IIHL's laureates were Nikolai Puchkov (Prague 1959), Vladislav Tret'yak (Helsinki 1974 and Moscow 1979), defencemen Ivan Tregubov (Oslo 1958 and Lausanne-Geneva 1961), Eduard Ivanov (Innsbruck 1964), Alexander Ragulin (Ljubljana 1966), Vitaly Davydov (Vienna 1967), Valery Vasilyev (Moscow 1973, Vienna 1977 and Moscow 1979), Vyacheslav Fetisov (Prague 1978), and forwards Vsevolod Bobrov (Stockholm 1954), Vyacheslav Starshinov (Tampere 1965), Konstantin Loktev (Ljubljana 1966), Alexander Maltsev (Stockholm 1970 and Prague 1972), Boris Mikhailov (Moscow 1973 and Moscow 1979), Alexander Yakushev (Munich-Düsseldorf 1975), Valery Kharlamov (Katowice 1976), Helmut Balderis (Vienna 1979) and Sergei Makarov (Moscow 1979).

Meet the IIHL's laureates.



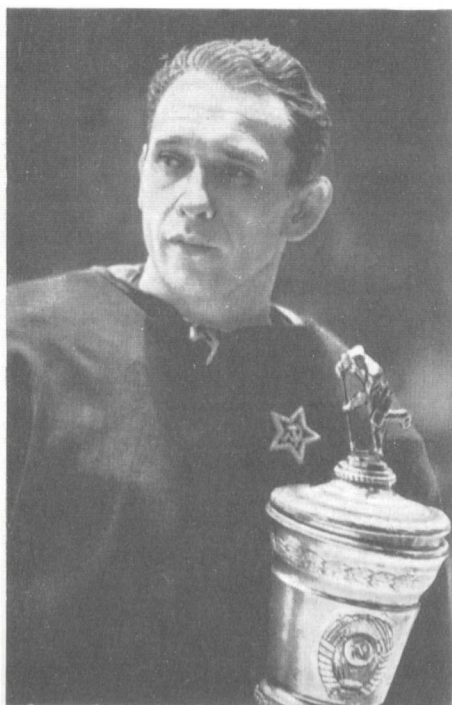
Vsevolod Bobrov

Vsevolod Bobrov, captain of the Soviet national team, was the first among the Soviet hockey players who won the prize of the world championship's best player. He was justly regarded as the most brilliant forward of Soviet hockey.

Vsevolod Bobrov was the only athlete who was the captain of the two national teams—football and ice hockey.

His effectiveness became a standard against which present-day masters compare their skill. In 1949, he scored eight times in a row in the Central Army Sports Club and Spartak match. Two years later—ten times during the match with Leningrad Dynamo. In the 1948 USSR championship Bobrov scored 52 times in 18 games. When the results of the season were added up, it turned out that Bobrov scored an average of 2,8 goal in a match. This record still holds.

Bobrov is the holder of the Order of Lenin and he is the Merited Coach of the USSR.

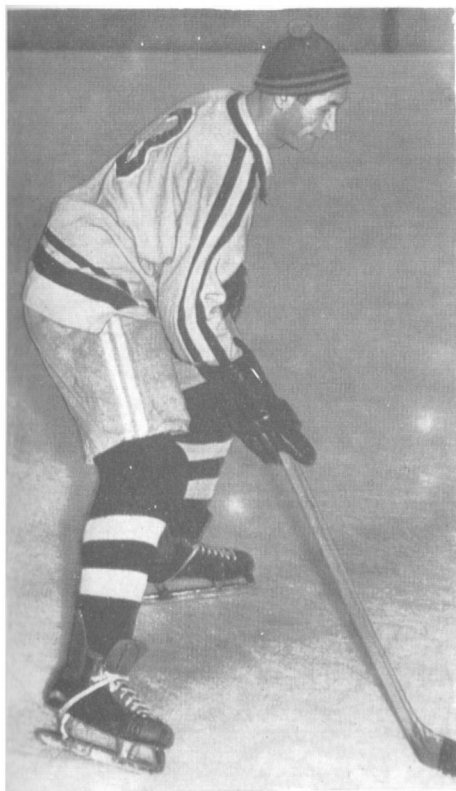


Nikolai Sologubov

As you already know Nikolai Sologubov was three times IIHL's laureate.

He was a true innovator of hockey with an inclination toward quest and improvisation. He was never content with the achieved and always tried to do better.

He played until 40, although he took part in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 and was wounded four times. He managed to return to sport and, having overcome all the vicissitudes of life, became one of the best hockey players in the history of Soviet sport.



Ivan Tregubov

Sologubov and Tregubov—the most titled pair of defencemen. One of them was named the best defenceman at the world championships for five years in a row (1956-1961).

Foreign journalists called Tregubov “Ivan the Terrible”. He was a real ice fighter—bold, resolute and with plenty of muscle. He fearlessly tackled any opponent, imposed an “in-fighting” on him and virtually suppressed his will. He was also active in attack.



Nikolai Puchkov

He was the first Soviet goalie to be awarded the highest IIHL's title. Nikolai played together with Bobrov and Babich, Sologubov and Tregubov.

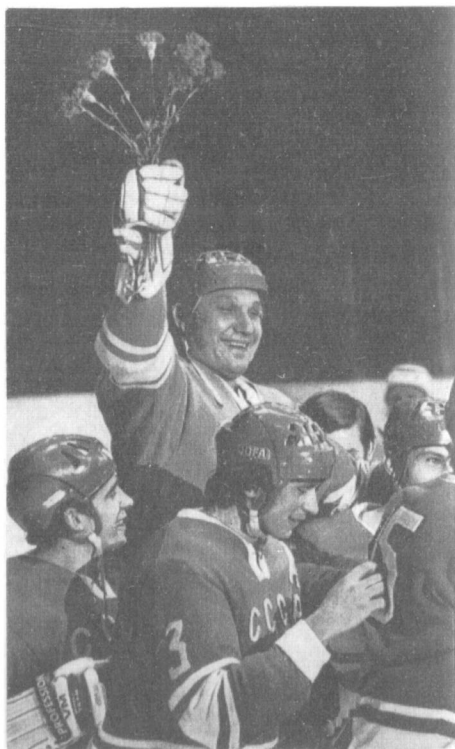
He possessed an excellent reaction and good technique. His manner of play showed the experience he accumulated playing football: Puchkov defended the goal of the Air Force team.

Nikolai constantly studied the manner of play of all the leading forwards and was always ready to play against them. Puchkov became the first goalie to be awarded the title of the Merited Coach of the USSR.



Eduard Ivanov

The Soviet national team made an excellent show at the 1964 Olympic Games in Innsbruck winning “all the world’s gold”—medals of the highest value in three victories in a row: Olympic Games, European and world championships. Many players of the Soviet national team made a good show and the championship’s directorate was in a difficulty. There were so many contenders for the IIHL’s prize that the “hockey fathers” decided to let the Soviet team decide itself who was its best player. All our players played at the Games selflessly displaying courage. But even in this close-knit and formidable team the coaches and players singled out Eduard Ivanov for his startling courage.



Alexander Ragulin

Alexander Ragulin, Eduard Ivanov’s partner in defence, received IIHL’s award at the 1966 world championship in Ljubljana.

At the 1973 world championship in Moscow he won his tenth world champion medal. No one has matched him as yet.

Ragulin was a powerful player dominating at the close approaches to his own goal. But power and strength were not the only arguments in his “debates” with the best forwards. He belonged to one of the most calculating players.



Vyacheslav Starshinov

At the 1965 world championship in the Finnish town of Tampere he was awarded the best forward prize. At the 1971 tournament in Sweden, scoring his 66 goal at the world championships, he repeated the record, set by another Soviet player Veniamin Alexandrov.

Vyacheslav had many assets to his credit: strength, speed, persistence, effectiveness, technical skill and courage... He was excellent in defence and there were no secrets for him in hockey tactics. Coaches said that Vyacheslav was in the game like a cruiser, stubbornly riding the sea during the storm—no tricks of the opponents' defencemen could deviate him from his course, to divert from rivals' goal.



Konstantin Loktev

Forward Loktev received IIHL prize in 1965 at Ljubljana Championship. Those were the last Loktev's years in Big-Time hockey, but even in his last period the outstanding forward played just as well as at the beginning of his sporting career. He was called the "brains" of his trio. It was he who began the greater part of all those clever and scintillating combinations for which the trio (Almetov, Loktev and Alexandrov) was famous.

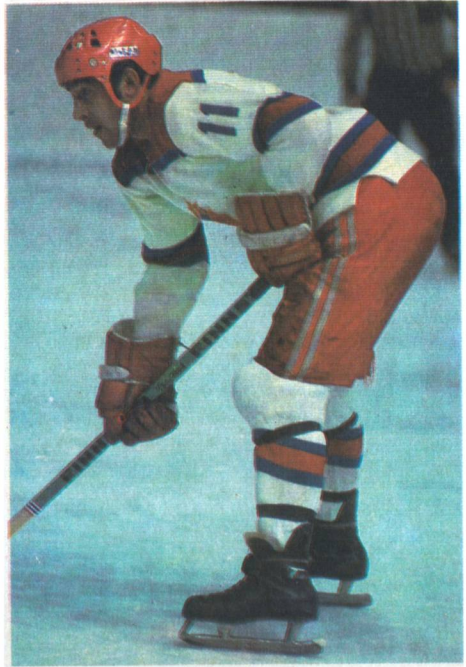
Loktev always aimed at the goal, attacking it with zest, but he never was too "greedy", never held on to the puck and if his partner was in more advantageous position, he would always give him an accurate and "convenient" pass.



Vitaly Davydov

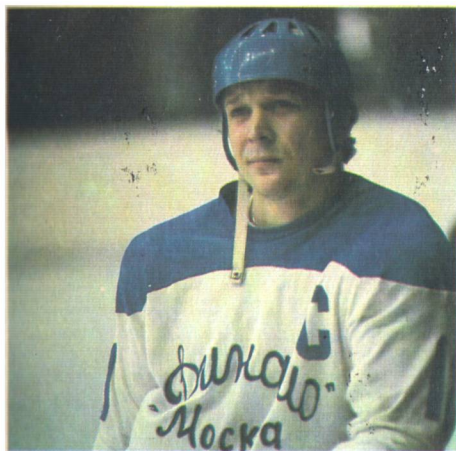
Vitaly was named the best defenceman of the 1967 Vienna Championship. He was fast, aggressive and excellently trained physically, technically and tactically.

Compared with his colleagues-giants, Davydov was obviously on the losing side—not very tall, thin, but his modest physical qualities did not prevent him from becoming a first-class master who was excellent in body-checking. A very punctual and attentive defenceman, he avoided gross errors and blunders and was always on hand to correct the mistakes of his comrades in defence.



Anatoly Firsov

Anatoly was named the best forward thrice—at the 1967 World Championship in Vienna, at the 1968 Olympic Games in Grenoble and at the 1971 World Championship in Switzerland. Three times Firsov was named the country's best player by Soviet journalists. Five years in a row he was included in the symbolic six selected by the journalists at world championships. Anatoly is an eight-times world and three-times Olympic champion.



Alexander Maltsev

At the 1970 World Championship the prize of the best forward went to this young player of the Soviet national team.

A representative of a new generation of Soviet players, Maltsev received his second award of the tournament's best forward at the 1972 World Championship in Prague. He played in a trio together with Vladimir Vikulov and Valery Kharlamov which turned out to be the best in the Soviet national squad.



Boris Mikhailov

Boris received the prize of the best forward at the 1973 and 1979 World Championships in Moscow.

Mikhailov is eight-times world, seven-times European and twice Olympic champion. He is rightly regarded one of the strongest wings. Boris is distinguished for high scoring.



Valery Vasilyev

Defenceman Vasilyev received the best defenceman prize at the three World Championships: 1973—in Moscow, 1977—in Vienna, and 1979—in Moscow, again. Valery is twice Olympic, six-times world and European champion.

He is very reliable in defence, can guess the direction of the opponents' attack and is good at body-checking.

He is a bold attacker, possesses a powerful long-distance shot and is eager to attack.



Vladislav Tretyak

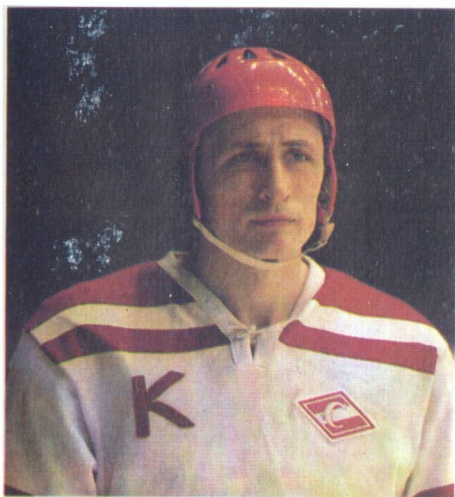
Vladislav won the title of the best goaltender at the 1974 World Championship in Helsinki and 1979 World Championship in Moscow.

It is considered that in hockey the goalie is half the team and Tretyak in some matches—players themselves say—is three quarters of the team. Time and again he would rescue the Central Army Club and the national squad, time and again on countless occasions he parried or caught pucks, which were considered certain. Journalists named him the best country's player three years in a row.

He is always calm, sure of himself and his partners, never gets offended and plays brilliantly in any match against any opponent.

The experienced professional goalies of the Canadian and American clubs admit that they have learned much from this young goaltender.

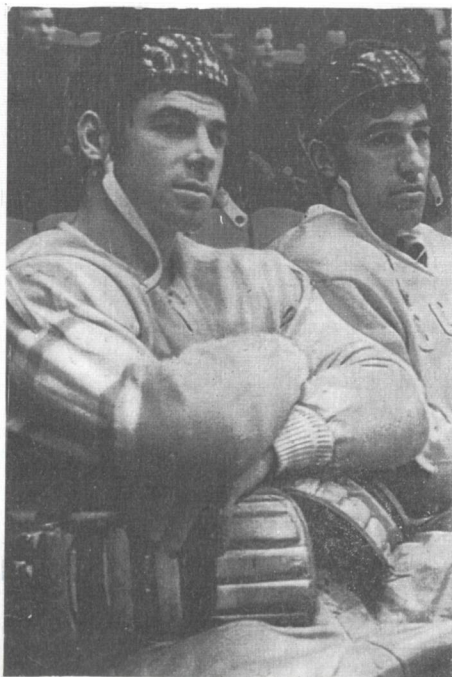
Tretyak has been elected to the Komsomol Central Committee for the second time. He is many-times world and twice Olympic champion.



Alexander Yakushev

He received his prize of the best forward at the 1975 world championship held in Munich-Düsseldorf (FRG).

Yakushev, a wingman, always aims at the goal, possesses an excellent technique, an accurate pass, a wide range of feints and a perfect and unexpected shot at the net. He attacks at a great speed. Many times world champion, he won this title for the first time at the 1967 tournament in Vienna. He is twice Olympic champion.



Valery Kharlamov

Valery is one of the strongest players of world hockey. He received his prize of the best forward at the 1976 World Championships in Katowice.

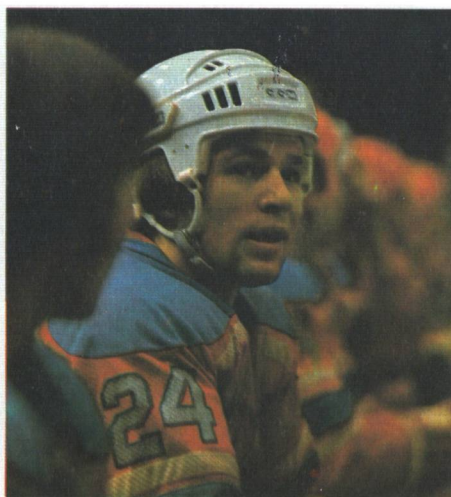
He is fast, highly technical and cunning, excellent both in passing and in shooting at the goal. Bold and enterprising, he easily shakes off his checkers. Twice he was named the country's best player. Many-times world and twice Olympic champion.



Helmut Balderis

Helmut received the prize of the best forward at the 1977 World Championship in Vienna.

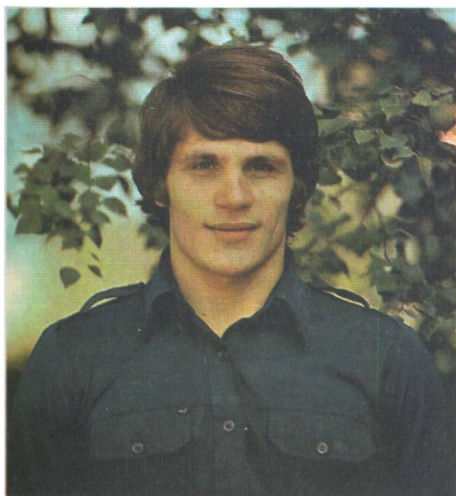
One of the most striking forwards of modern ice hockey. He is especially dangerous in man-to-man encounters, easily breaking away from his opponents. Is distinguished for high speed, excellent by-passing in which he uses a number of original and shrewd feints. Helmut is a clever and versatile forward and is famous for his high scoring record.



Vyacheslav Fetisov

Even the experts of this game have been amazed how fast this player made the summits of mastery. In 1978, Vyacheslav was named the best defender at the junior world championship and three months later, a novice of the Soviet national team, whose name was little known to anyone on the eve of the Prague World Championship, was declared the strongest and the most skilfull defenceman among the best players of the world.

Fetisov is equally good in defence and in attack. He is clever at tackling the opponents' attackers, is confident in body-checking and, seizing the puck, finds the best decision, making an excellent pass to his partner who is in the best of position at the moment. Vyacheslav willingly joins in the attack and possesses a powerful and accurate shot.



Sergei Makarov

A new star of today's ice hockey. He received his first prize of the best forward at the Moscow World Championship in 1979, when he was 21. He is a fast and aggressive forward, whose actions are distinguished by agility, inclination to by-passing and a drive for the goal. He is decisive and bold. Despite an average height and a seeming fragility, he never avoids body-checking and makes a bee-line for the goal even if there are two or three rivals in his way.

Ice Hockey Code

Ice hockey rules cover a whole book. Here we would like to remind young players of certain basic conditions of the game.

Team Composition

The team consists of six players. This is an indispensable requirement which must strictly be carried out when conducting any hockey match. Wrong are those boys who, playing a match in their courtyard, pick up four or five strong players and suggest that the other team has six-seven small boys to equalise the forces. It would be better to divide strong players equally among the two teams so that there would be six players in each team.

This section of the rules has a very important note. A minor penalty is imposed on a team if there are more than six players on the ice at the same time. You have probably seen how this or that team was penalised by two minutes when it had six players and a goalie on the ice. In this case any player of the team is sent to the penalty box at the captain's decision.

The Players and Their Uniform

The team may field 17 players and two goalies all wearing the same uniform.

Each team is allowed to have only one goalie on the ice. The goaltender can be replaced by the reserve or by any player.

No other player can wear goalie's togs except the reserve goaltender or the player replacing him.

Substitutes

The players on the ice can be replaced at any time by those from the reserve bench on condition that the players leaving ice must be on the benches for reserve players before the substitute comes out on the ice. Players are to be substituted in the space limited by the length of the bench. A two-minute penalty is imposed for entering or leaving the ice outside this space.

The player in the penalty box after his penalty time is over, if he is to be replaced, must head for the benches before any change is made. A two-minute penalty is imposed for violating this rule.

Injuries

Now imagine a case when the goalie received an injury and has to leave the rink. His place is taken up by a reserve goalie. But he is not given time to prepare for the game, to warm up.

What if both goalies are put out of action and are unable to play? In this situation the team is given ten minutes for a player, who will stand in the goal and enjoy all the rights of a goalie, to get ready and dress accordingly. In this case one of the declared goalies will not be able to return to continue the game.

If a penalised player has received an injury, he may go to the dressing room without sitting in the penalty box. His place in the box will be taken by one of the players.

Game Duration

The game consists of three periods of 20 minutes of clean time each with 10-minute intervals between each period. (Youngsters under 14 have three 15-minute periods with the same intervals). If the boys have no stopwatch or a chess clock, play without taking into account the clean time, but not to full exhaustion "until 20 goals are scored". Many youngsters agree beforehand—let's play until ten goals are scored and then change goals. The team which scores 20 goals first wins. But the rules say that the winner is the team which scores the greatest number of goals during the three 20-minute periods. That is during a definite time. And it isn't necessary to score 20 or more goals.

The teams exchange goals after the end of each period.

There was an incident during the Khimik-Central Army Club game. One of the Khimik's players received an injury several seconds before the end of the second period. All of a sudden the referee gave a whistle ending the game. The players left the ice while the doctors tended the player. All the spectators saw on the scoreboard that there were several seconds to go to the end of the period... Were the referees wrong?

No, they were not. The rules say that if any unexpected hold-up develops in the last 10 minutes of the first or second periods, the referee can call an interval

and add the time left at the end of the period to the next period of playing. When the unfinished time of the previous period ends, the teams must exchange sides and resume play immediately.

Players over 17 can play at temperature of maximum -20°C , and players under 11-12—not lower than -15°C .

Penalties

Now a few words about penalties imposed on players and teams.

The following penalties can be imposed on the players during the game:

1. Minor penalties (there are also so called "bench penalties").
2. Major penalties.
3. Penalties for misconduct.
4. Penalties for misconduct: a player is sent off the ice to the end of the game.
5. Penalty shot.
6. Penalties when a player is sent off to the end of the game (a match penalty).

Minor Penalties

For a minor penalty any player with the exception of the goalie must be sent off the ice for two minutes of clean time, during which time no player can replace the penalised one.

Minor bench penalty means sending off the ice of one player of the team on which a 2-minute penalty has been imposed. The player who is to sit in the box may be determined by the captain or his deputy.

The team is on the ice shorthanded: one of the defencemen violated the rules. The five opposition players skated into the defence zone of the defending team,



Striking a player with your hand



Match penalty

several passes followed and the puck found its way into the net. The player in the penalty box skated out onto the ice. Was he right to do it? Yes, he acted within the rules. If the team scores when the other team is shorthanded by one or two players, penalised by a minor or bench penalty, the time of the minor penalties ends.

If the team scored when the opposing team was shorthanded by one or two penalised players, the player who was the first to be penalised is the first to return to the ice (he continues to sit in the penalty box if he had received a double minor penalty. In this case his first minor penalty ends).

Major Penalties

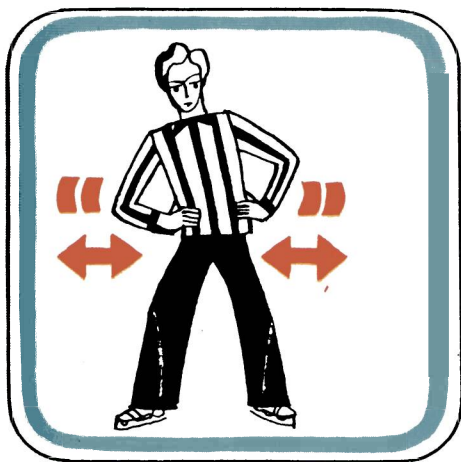
For the first major penalty in one game the player (excluding goalie) must be sent off the ice for five minutes during which no substitution is made.

The player (excluding goalie) is sent off the ice for 15 minutes for the second major penalty (major penalty plus a penalty for misconduct). This player can be replaced after five minutes. In this case a replacing player must take his place in the penalty box so as to be ready to emerge onto the ice after five minutes.

For the third major penalty the player (including goalie) is sent off the ice for the rest of the game, but he can be replaced after five minutes. A reserve player must take his place in the penalty box.

Penalties for Misconduct

What is "misconduct"? It is said in the hockey rules that a player is penalised for misconduct if he abuses anyone—an opponent, a referee, a partner, if he argues with referees or shows disrespect toward the decision of the referees, or purposely pokes or knocks the puck out of reach of the referee, or strikes the stick



Ordering off for arguing with the referee or misconduct



Tripping

against the ice or against the boards showing dissatisfaction.

All the players including the goalie are penalised for misconduct for 10 minutes of clean time.

If a player after being penalised for the first time continues to behave in the same way, he is sent off the ice till the end of the game. In this case it is allowed to replace him with a reserve player.

Any player penalised till the end of the game is not allowed to play in another game until his case is taken up by the organisation staging the competitions.

Penalty Shot

As in football, two players take part in it—the goalie and the player who is to execute the penalty shot.

At any violation of the rules, for which a penalty is imposed, the puck is placed at the centre face-off circle and the player,

appointed by the captain to execute the penalty shot, collects the puck and starts skating towards the goal at a signal from the main referee and tries to score.

What if a player stops before the goal-tender so as to take better aim? Will it be within the rules? No, it will be a violation of the rules.

In executing a penalty shot, the goalie must remain in the crease until the puck crosses the blue line. Then the goalie can try to make a save or stop the player by any allowed method. If the goalie throws his stick at the player advancing with the puck or at the puck, it is counted as a score.

The goal is not counted, if the puck is sent into the net on a rebound from the goalie, goal posts, crossbar or face boards.



Pushing the opponent with your hands or striking him with the stick



Pushing the opponent against boards

Penalties Imposed on Goalies

It may have seemed to the goalie that a forward attacked him too roughly so he decided to retaliate. The whistle will follow immediately: the referees will impose on the goalie a two-minute penalty. Will he be sent off the ice? No. The rules say that the goalie is not sent off the ice for a minor, a major or for penalties for misconduct. One of the players who was on the ice the moment the violation was committed must be sent off the ice instead of the goalie. This player is determined by the captain of the team.

If in the same game the referee imposes a second major penalty on the goalie, then he is penalised for misconduct till the end of the game.

Allowed and Prohibited Tripping

Tripping is the most widespread violation of the rules.

A player who places his stick, knee, foot, shoulder, hand or elbow so as to trip an opponent and throw him off balance is given a minor penalty.

If a puck-carrier in the attacking zone (a player has only a goalie in front of him) is tripped from behind, is prevented from making a shot at the goal, a penalty shot is awarded to the team. The referee does not stop the game until the attacking team loses the puck.

Pushing Against the Boards (Holding at the Boards)

This is also one of the most widespread violations of the rules. The player who pushes his opponent as a result of which the latter strikes the boards forcefully is given a minor or a major penalty (depending on the force of the push).

Broken Stick

Imagine that the defenceman tackling an opponent, breaks his stick. Half a



Hitting the opponent with an elbow or with the tip of your stick



Sticking the opponent

blade snaps off. But he continues to play with this stick. However, the referee immediately stops the game and imposes a minor penalty on the player. This case is provided for by the rules.

When the stick breaks, the player must leave it on the ice.

What is to be done, you will ask? Sticks break quite often during the game.

There are two ways to act. The first: the player must skate to the bench of his team and take a new stick. This is, of course, may be a bit risky, because the opponents can obtain superiority. The second: the player can continue playing without his stick right up to the end of the play episode, until the referee gives a whistle.

Body-Checking

Body-checking is allowed all over the ice by catching the opponent with your shoulder, chest or hip.

Elbow and Knee Pushing

Two episodes. Player A in tackling pushed an opponent with his shoulder sending him onto the ice. Several instances later player B elbowed his checker, but the latter retained his balance. Were the players right in their actions?

Player A played correctly, but player B was at fault. The rules properly determine body-checking. Those players who push or strike their opponents with their elbows or knees are given minor penalties.

The player, who inflicts an injury on an opponent by striking him with an elbow or a knee, is given a major penalty.

Face-offs

The puck is brought into play by one of the referees. He throws the puck between the sticks of the players, who stand opposite each other with their skates parallel to



Elbow pushing or elbow playing



Hitting the opponent's foot with the stick

the sides of the rink, holding their sticks at an equal distance from the face-off point.

Scoring and Assisting

The goal is considered to be scored if the puck fully crosses the goal line.

If the puck is diverted into the net by a player of the defending team, the goal is counted and the player of the attacking team who was the last to possess the puck is written down in the game record as the one who scored.

Assume the following episode: a player of the attacking team strikes the puck with his foot and it is diverted into the net by an opponent. The goal is counted and the player who hit the puck with his foot is the one who scored. However, if after the puck was struck with the foot it goes right into the goal, or if on the way into the net touches the goalie, the goal is not counted.

When the puck finds its way into the net after being sent by an attacking player, having rebounded from a stick or any part of the body or skates of another player of the attacking team, the player from whom it has rebounded into the net is recorded as the one who scored and the one who made a shot, as the player who made an assist.

Holding the Puck

If a player (excluding the goalie) covers the puck with his hand (and referee, quite understandably, stops the game), a minor penalty is imposed on him.

But if a goalie catches the puck, takes a look and upon seeing his forward far ahead, throws him the puck, will the game be stopped?

Yes, certainly. The goaltender is not allowed to throw the puck forward in the direction of the opponent's goal. He also cannot hide the puck behind his pads.



Hitting the opponent's hand



Dangerous play with a high stick or high-sticking

throw it on the ice with his hands or knock the puck clear off the rink with his stick. The goalie is also prohibited to pile up snow or create some other obstructions in front of his goal, which in the opinion of the referee can impede scoring. In such cases the goalie is given a minor penalty.

Players are permitted to stop the puck, hit it in the air or push it along the ice with their hands. But if the player directs the puck deliberately to his partner with his hand, the game is stopped and a face-off is called at the face-off circle of the team which violated the rules.

High-Sticking

The player scored, having caught the puck flying at about his height, but the referee gave a whistle and gestured that no goal was scored.

Why?

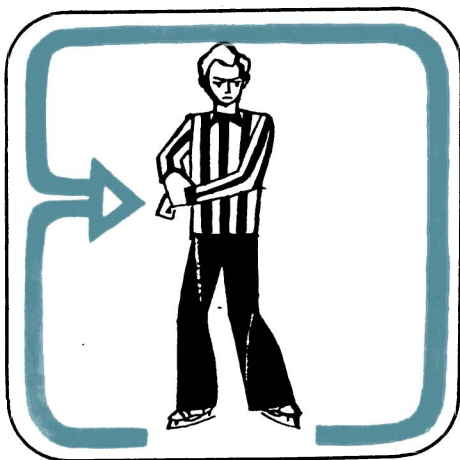
The rules say that goals scored with the stick raised above shoulder height are disallowed, except in the case when the puck was scored by a player of the defending team.

If a player raised his stick too high and played dangerously towards an opponent, a small penalty may be imposed on him.

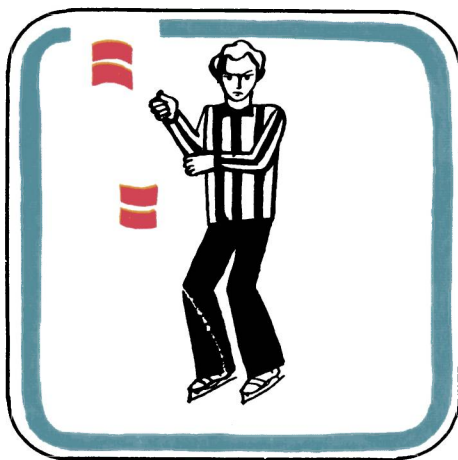
If a player raises his stick above shoulder height and bruises an opponent, the referee must impose a major penalty on the culprit. High-sticking is prohibited, if there are players of the opposition in the immediate vicinity.

Holding

A player who holds the opponent with his hands, stick or by any other method is given a minor penalty.



Holding the opponent



Holding the opponent with the stick

Cross-Checking

A minor penalty is imposed on a player who holds his opponent with the stick or checks his movement with it.

A major penalty is imposed on those players who bruise the opponent with the stick.

Blocking

A minor penalty is imposed on a player who blocks or deliberately checks the puck-carrying opponent or deliberately strikes his hands with his stick, or interferes with the opponent who has lost his stick and tries to recover it.

Off-Side

Try and count sometimes the number of whistles which officials give during off-sides. They probably make one third of all the cases when the referees stop the game.

Certain hockey fans determine a violation depending in which spot of the rink the player touched the puck with his stick.

This is wrong. Remember: it is the position of the player's skates and not his stick that is decisive in determining off-side.

A player is off-side when both the player's skates are fully beyond either the centre or the blue line, including the width of the line itself.

If a player stands behind the red line and stops the puck sent to him from his defence zone before it crosses the red line no off-side is called. In this case he must return to his side beyond the red line and only then move across it or send the puck across towards the opponent's goal. The same applies to the off-side beyond the blue line.

Passes

On the other hand, the position of the puck and not the position of the player's skates is decisive in determining the zone, from which the pass has been made. Here,



Icing



Incorrect tackling

for instance, is a situation, incidentally, very common: a player beyond the blue line of his defending zone (in other words, in the neutral zone) in possession of the puck, which is beyond the blue line, passes it to a partner who is ready for it beyond the red line. In this case the pass is correct since it is addressed to the partner already from the neutral zone.

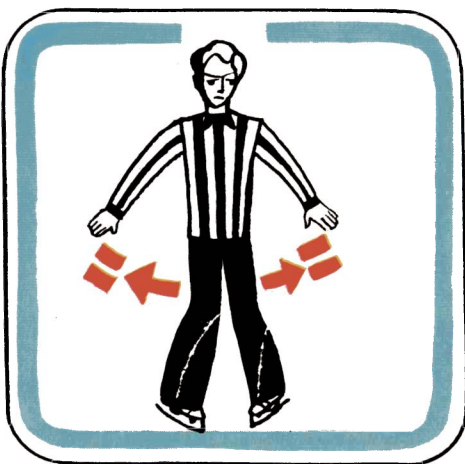
The rules sound quite intricate, but their essence is quite simple. Just read attentively. The puck can be passed to any player of your team within the limits of any of the three zones but cannot be passed up front from a player in one zone to the player of the same team in another zone. There is one exception. A player of the defending team may pass the puck from his defending zone to the red line without an off-side being called. However, his partner can accept the pass if he is in the right position at the red line, or if he crosses the line after the puck. In the opposite case the game is stopped and

an off-side called at the point the pass was made.

If the puck, passed up front from one zone into the other, is received by a player of the same team who is not in the zone from which the pass was made, so that the player will be off-side, the game is stopped and face-off declared in the zone from which the pass was made.

If a player, in the zone from which the pass was made follows the puck into the next zone, he may play in any zone or behind the opponents' goal.

If the attacking player passes the puck from the attacking zone back towards his goal, the opponents can play the puck anywhere, regardless of the fact as to whether they were in that zone or not the moment the pass was made, but on one condition that they (the opponents) follow the puck into the attacking zone.



Pushing or holding the opponent without the puck

The goal is disallowed, or no icing, or no off-side

The Puck in the Attacking Zone

The players of the attacking team should not precede the puck into the attacking zone.

If the player enters the attacking zone before the puck does, an off-side is called; a face-off is held in the neutral zone at the nearest face-off point in the attacking zone. If the puck is seized by a player of the defending team or taken out or passed by the defending team into the neutral zone, no off-side is called.

If a player brings or passes the puck from the neutral zone back into his own defending one at the moment when there is an opposition player there, no off-side is called.

Throwing the Stick

A fast wing has feinted the opponent by showing that he will dribble the puck to the left, then made a lunge to the right and sped to the left past the bemuddled defenceman. He was alone against the

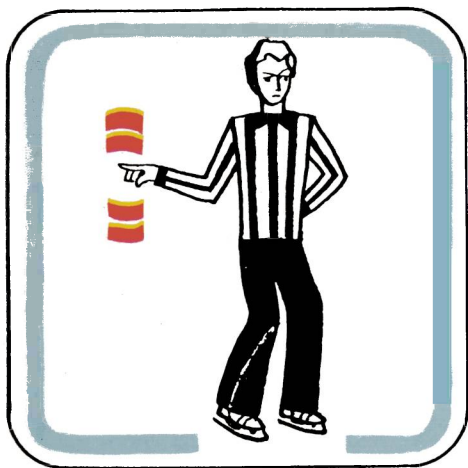
goalie and no one could stop him. Then the defenceman who made the blunder took aim and threw the stick at the puck diverting it from the goal.

What the decision of the referee will be?

Yes, you've guessed correctly. He awarded a penalty shot. If a player of the defending team, including goalie, deliberately throws a stick or part of it in his defending zone in order to interfere with scoring, the referee gives time for the episode to end and, if no goal is scored, awards a penalty shot to the attacking team. It must be said that the stick cannot be thrown onto the ice in other zone either. A major penalty is given for such action. A penalty is also imposed for misconduct on a player who throws the stick or any of its parts beyond the rink.

Andrei Starovoitov, referee, international class, shares his secrets.

It is no easy thing to referee hockey matches. A referee has to keep an eye on the puck and on the actions of the players in constantly changing situations. In a fraction of a second



Ordering off is postponed



Referee withholding whistle in off-side position when the other team is in possession of the puck

he must determine whether this or that player violated the rules executing a body check or receiving a pass. An experienced referee foresees the development of events on the ice and is in time at the most convenient place to keep an eye on the puck and the players. At the same time being in the melee of the events he must not interfere with the players.

Mistakes in refereeing are impermissible because they can affect the course of the game most disastrously.

When the referee comes out onto the ice he realises that the players may have no intentions to violate the rules—be rough, trip each other or create off-side situations. But right from the beginning of the game their aim is to break into each other's zones. Therefore, the referee from the outset must determine whether a team enters the opponents' zone correctly or not. If a referee makes a mistake, the normal course of the match becomes disrupted. If a referee stops a correctly-mounted attack, players become nervous in other attacks. If a referee allows players to violate the attacking rules, they will decide that he is not qualified enough and does not know what they can and what they cannot do, will disregard off-side rule, break into the attacking zone preceding the puck.

Can a referee avoid such mistakes? Of course, he can.

While the puck is in play he must not slacken his attention even for a moment. Nat-

urally, he must not look for violations deliberately but he must be able to pick-up violations of the rules during play.

A referee must learn to skate well and fast, otherwise, he won't be able to take up a convenient position to watch the game or will interfere with the players.

Mistakes can be reduced to a minimum if there is good coordination between the referees. Say, the game develops in the defending zone of one of the teams, in the corner. One of the linesmen stations himself somewhere behind by the goal and watches the puck. He immediately raises his hand if one of the players of the defending team shoots the puck into the neutral zone. The second linesman stations himself near the blue line of this zone and watches the actions of the players before the goal of the defending team. When the puck is thrown out of the defending zone, the second linesman must look at his partner and note whether he lifted his hand or not (if he raised his hand, it means the puck has been thrown out by the players of the defending team).

The referee must be especially attentive following the actions of the defending team. Very often they violate the off-side rule, cross the red line before the puck.

The rules prohibit a player holding an opponent with the stick, or to strike with it hands, feet or body. Such violations are not hard to notice. It is not enough to notice them,

they have to be classified correctly. Players are allowed to lift or hit from underneath the opponent's stick, press it against the ice, hit it from the side or at the lower part of the stick. But it is allowed only for players who try to get the puck away from an opponent. Any of these methods used against a player without the puck is a violation of the rules.

Trying to hit the stick with a stick, the players sometimes miss and strike a hand or a foot or the body of an opponent.

Was it deliberate or not? In the first case the referee must penalise the culprit, in the second no penalty is given.

Referees, regretfully, do not always evaluate the developments on the ice similarly. One referee penalises a player for some actions while another one gives no whistle in the same situation. This tends to disorientate players.

In conclusion I will repeat that a normal course of the game greatly depends on the ability of a referee to correctly evaluate the situation.

Here are several interviews with the referees serving matches of the European junior championships held in March 1973 in Moscow.

"Is there any difference in refereeing the matches between the adults and juniors?" was one question put to referees. Here are their answers.

Karl Heidinger (Austria).

Hockey for adults and juniors is subordinated to one and the same book: The Code of Hockey Rules. At every international tournament the directorate gathers the referees together and gives them instructions. In Lenin-grad, too, we referees were warned about the strict observance of the rules. At the age 16-18 the physical fitness of the players is very different. Youngsters who are physically stronger try at times to "break" the resistance of their opponents with the help of body-checking which may not be very clean. We must penalise them severely for this. If a hockey player doesn't learn to observe hockey rules while still young, what will happen to him later on?

Victor Dombrovsky (USSR).

I think that juniors have to be refereed more strictly than adults. After seeing the

manner of play of the Canadian professionals, certain young players in Sweden, Finland, the FRG try to play in the "Canadian" manner. We must check any violent play of the young hockey players.

Martin Ehrhard (FRG).

Adult players had to adopt themselves to pressure play all over the rink, meeting certain psychological difficulties. Today's juniors do not have to readopt themselves, because they play according to these rules nearly from their "hockey birth". This is, perhaps, why young players are not shy to meet an opponent with such "passion", which at times goes counter to hockey rules.

Aleš Pražák (Czechoslovakia).

For three years now I have been closely watching the strongest European juniors, refereeing international matches. With every new championship it becomes much easier to referee the matches of young hockey players because their technical and tactical preparedness is growing. Each new generation comes to the national teams having firmly learned what a player can do on the ice and what he can't. The matches which decide prize-winning places in the tournaments are the most difficult for referees. When a referee directs a culprit off the ice, at times practically all the team, very often supported by its coaches, storms the referee. At such heated moments it is very important for the referee to keep cool because he is not only recording this or that violation of the rules but he must also be an educator. Team leaders, directorate of championships and ... journalists must never forget about this function of the referee.

Reno Touminen (Finland).

So far referees have no special worries. Nevertheless, the reaction of certain juniors to the referee's decision cannot but put us on guard. Lately, we, somehow, became too liberal to certain actions of young players. Juniors who take their first steps in hockey already allow themselves to make remarks in our direction, especially at the final moments of the match. We have no right to shut our eyes to this, allegedly so as not to disrupt the normal course of the game. The penalty must not depend on whether the fault was made at the first minute or the last minute of the match, whether the count was 10-0 or 3-3. Law is law.

The Snowman Tells His Story.

The Sovetsky Sport Prize

This tournament, I think, which has come to be so popular both at home and abroad, in its importance approaches competition in which victory is especially important and enticing.

At first this tournament was regarded as an intermediate, training competition. Today all the teams have changed their attitude to it. The first official competition of the hockey year is seen not only as a proving ground, where this or that player or team checks strength and possibilities, but also a major tournament, a victory at which places a team among recognised leaders.

In the autumn of 1957, 15 teams vied for the first time for the prize at the opening of the season. Taking into consideration an obvious inequality of forces from different clubs, the tournament was held with under handicap conditions: before each match a panel of judges determined odds given by one team to another, which were announced to the teams at the end of the game.

The final, in which the Central Army Sports Club played against Avangard from Chelyabinsk, was won by the Army men—12-6 despite the odds of four goals.

In the next season the odds in the final were three goals. Ten teams met in the tournament with the Central Army Sports Club and Lokomotiv meeting in the final. The Army men won the game 8-5 with the odds taken into account.

In 1959, the prize was not vied for and in 1960 the tournament was held without odds: the teams became somewhat even in strength and no odds were needed any longer. Nineteen teams took part in the tournament. Moscow Spartak and Gorky Torpedo met in the final. Torpedo won by a big margin—5-1. This was the first time Moscow teams lost in a major national competition.

After that the prize went twice in a row to the Central Army Sports Club. In 1961 (with 13 teams participating), the Central Army Sports Club outplayed Lokomotiv in the final—6-1 and then (this time only 11 teams vied for the prize) defeated in a most decisive manner Gorky Torpedo—14-2.

In 1963, the interest to the prize dropped somewhat and only nine clubs expressed their wish to compete. The prize was taken away from Moscow by Khimik (Voskresensk), which snatched the victory from Dynamo—2-1.

In the next season the Dynamo players won merit by beating the redoubtable rival—the Central Army Sports Club 6-3. This time 11 teams met in the tournament.

They met in the final encounter twice more. In 1965 (with 12 teams playing), the Army men won 5-4 and in 1966 (with 30 teams vying for the prize), they secured a confident victory by 8-3.

In 1967, the *Sovetsky Sport Prize* went to Spartak; which in a decisive match outplayed the Central Army Sports Club—

4-2. This time 14 teams competed for the prize.

A year later the same opponents made the final, but this time it was the Army men who won—6-5.

It became more and more difficult to win the tournament with 23 teams vying for the right to play in the final.

In 1969, there was an even greater number of teams—24. Once again the old rivals met in the final—Dynamo and the Central Army Sports Club. The Army men won for the eighth time (4-1) and the organisers of the tournament—editorial office of the newspaper *Sovetsky Sport* gave the prize to the Army men for perpetuity.

The final of the 1970 competitions was somewhat unusual. Three main periods were not enough to determine the winner. Additional time was given for the first time. Spartak outplayed the Central Army Sports Club 6-4. Incidentally, 17 teams vied for the prize this time.

In 1971, there were 21 teams with the Leningrad Army men and the Central Army Sports Club (“traditionally”) playing in the final. Moscow Army men won—6-1.

In 1972, 20 teams which played in the tournament were divided into four subgroups. In Moscow the tournament was won by the Army men, in Leningrad—by Moscow Spartak, in Chelyabinsk—Gorky Torpedo and in Riga—local Dynamo team.

In the semifinals the country's champions—Moscow Army men outplayed Gorky Torpedo—6-2, while Spartak beat Riga players—8-2.

Traditional opponents met in the final: the Central Army Sports Club and Spartak.

The match lived up to all the expectations of the fans—it turned out to be an interesting one. The Army men opened the score with Spartak players equalising it. Then the champions scored two more goals with the Spartak team replying with two of their own. Six minutes before the game's end the Army Club took and kept the lead winning 6-3 and captured the prize.

Beginning with 1965, foreign teams began to take part in the tournament. At first only one team from abroad came—Army players from Sofia (Bulgaria). It was followed in turn by ZKL of Brno and Slovan of Bratislava (Czechoslovakia).

In August 1971, two Czechoslovak teams ZKL (Brno) and VSZ (Košice) and two Finnish teams Jokerit and Assat, Dynamo GDR and selected teams from Poland and Rumania took part in the tournament. The following August Moscow hosted national teams from Poland, Rumania, the youth team from the FRG (Olympia-76) and club teams from Czechoslovakia (Tesla) and Sweden (Modo-AIK), Finland (15-times national champion Ilves) and from the GDR—Dynamo (comprising players from Berlin and Weiswasser).

The tournament's formula also changed. Handicaps became a thing of the past and zonal competitions appeared. In various years they were held at the rinks of Leningrad, Kiev, Minsk, Riga, Chelyabinsk and Voskresensk.

Each season brought novelty to the tournament. In 1973, it was held for the first time in Leningrad. Again the Central Army Sports Club and Spartak met in the decisive match. And again there ensued a tense struggle for each goal, for

every metre of ice. The Army men won 6-5.

Guests from seven countries took part in the tournament—GDR, Poland, Rumania, Finland, FRG, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, with Finland fielding two teams—Jokerit and Koo-Vee.

Next season also brought a novelty: no final was held for the first time in the history of the tournaments. The following teams became the winners in zonal tournaments: in Leningrad—local Army club, in Kiev—Krylya Sovetov, in Riga—Spartak, and in Minsk—Torpedo of Gorky.

No final match was held in the autumn of 1975. Four winners became known in the zonal tournaments played in Leningrad, Kiev, Riga and Cherepovets. In the next year the matches were held in Leningrad, Minsk, Chelyabinsk and Riga, producing four winners. In 1977 and 1978, the Dynamo players won the *Sovetsky Sport Prize*.

The *Sovetsky Sport* Tournament has become a major event of the international hockey season.

International *Izvestia* Prize Tournament

The International *Izvestia* Prize Tournament has become traditional. The leading national hockey teams take part in this tournament.

This unique minor world championship (naturally, unofficial) allows the coaches of national teams to test their battle line-ups on the eve of the world championship or Olympic Games. Competition at the highest level makes the players give their utmost while team coaches size up their charges.

The first international tournament, held in Moscow in 1967, was devoted to the 50th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Matches were staged in the three cities—Moscow, Leningrad and Voskresensk with six teams taking part in them—the first and second Czechoslovak and Soviet nationals, national teams of Canada and Poland.

Soviet coaches A. Chernyshev and A. Tarasov decided to give our second team a try-out so as to see what kind of replacements there were. The tournament was won by the first Soviet national team. Like the second Soviet squad it bagged eight points but a better tally of goals scored and lost gave it victory.

It is interesting to note that the Canadians lost to two Czechoslovak teams and to two of ours.

The results of the tournament: 1. USSR-1. 2. USSR-2. 3. Czechoslovakia-2. 4. Czechoslovakia-1. 5. Canada. 6. Poland.

In 1968, the tournament was less representative with only two Soviet, the Canadian and the Finnish teams participating. The first Soviet team won all the three matches and captured the prize.

The results of the tournament: 1. USSR-1. 2. USSR-2. 3. Finland. 4. Canada.

The third *Izvestia* Prize Tournament collected all the participants of the oncoming world championship. The Canadians, who a month later refused to take part in the world championship, also came. Teams from Czechoslovakia, Canada, Sweden, Finland, the GDR and the USSR took part.

The Soviet players tied with the Canadians and beat all other opponents. Nine points out of 10 won them first place. The

Canadians lost to Czechoslovaks and captured second place. The prize-winners were awarded huge Tula samovars.

The results were as follows: 1. USSR. 2. Canada. 3. Czechoslovakia. 4. Sweden. 5. Finland. 6. the GDR.

The fourth *Izvestia* Prize Tournament was held in December 1970. The national teams of Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Finland, Poland and the Soviet Union vied for the big Khokhloma boxes.

For the first time the guests captured the Grand Prix. Having won in all the four matches, including one with the hosts (3-1), the Czechoslovak team captured first place. Three months later the young players, who had made their debut in the Czechoslovak team, confirmed their high class at the world and European championships in Switzerland, where the Czechoslovak players became European champions.

The victory of the Polish team over the Swedes (4-3) was the greatest surprise of the Moscow tournament.

The results of the tournament were: 1. Czechoslovakia. 2. USSR. 3. Sweden. 4. Finland. 5. Poland.

In the second half of 1971, the fifth *Izvestia* Prize Tournament was held in Moscow devoted to the 25th Anniversary of the Soviet hockey and attended by the teams from Czechoslovakia, Finland, Sweden (it was not the Tre Kronor which came from Stockholm but Vikings—team No. 2).

It was not surprising that the Swedes didn't make a single point and remained in the last place. The tussle for the first place was exceptionally acute with the three teams winning the same number of points—four.

The world champions beat their main

rival, the team from Czechoslovakia 5-2, but lost to the Finnish boys—2-4. In turn, the Czechoslovak team snatched a difficult victory from the Suomi players (1-0). The distribution of top places, therefore, depended on the difference of goals scored and let through. As a result, the hosts came out winners (19-7). The Czechoslovak team was second (11-6) and the Finns—third (8-4).

All the prize-winners received big matryoshkas with a score of small ones fitted one into another, while the Swedes got a huge Tula pryanik (a cookie) to sweeten the bitterness of their defeat.

The Swedes, were satisfied because their participation in the tournament became a baptism by fire for those who tomorrow would enter the fight for the world crown.

The following *Izvestia* Prize Tournament held in December 1972 in Luzhniki in Moscow, where three months later the next world championships began, was no less interesting. Five out of six participants in the subsequent world championships—Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Finland, Poland and the Soviet Union—took part in the tournament.

This time there were quite a few surprises. The Finnish team tied with the world champions—the Czechoslovak players—the young Polish team “again spoiled the mood” of Swedish masters in a tie. The two favourites—Czechoslovakia and Sweden also tied.

The Soviet team made an excellent show winning four matches and bagging eight points of the eight possible, scoring 34 goals and letting through only 10.

The results of the tournament: 1. USSR. 2. Czechoslovakia. 3. Sweden. 4. Finland. 5. Poland.

The senior coach of the Soviet national team was pleased with the results of the tournament. He said: "Our task at the tournament was to win the prize and besides to baptise by fire and check in action our young players. We are glad to have attained both ends."

The tournament for the *Izvestia* Prize was, I think, the most unusual in the 1974/1975 season. The four teams from Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Finland and the USSR played in the six rounds: each national team played against all other opponents six times. With three matches at home and three—away.

The tournament lasted not the usual week, but several months. The *Izvestia* Prize went to Czechoslovak team, which gleaned 29 points, Soviet players came second with their 26 points and Finns—third.

It is interesting to note that Czechoslovak players scored in the matches with their Soviet opponents nine points out of the 12 possible ones—four victories, a tie and one defeat. The Czechoslovak team was especially strong against the champions of the world at home winning all the three games with an impressive tally—6-1, 4-2 and 9-3. Never in its history had the Soviet national team received such a resounding defeat.

However, it isn't for nothing that they say, that one beaten equals two unbeaten. Our coaches drew the correct conclusions and two weeks later at the current world championships our team confidently defeated the Czechoslovak team.

The next *Izvestia* Prize Tournament was a short one: the same four teams gathered in Moscow for a few days for a one-round tournament with the USSR national capturing the prize. In 1977, the

main prize went to Czechoslovak players and in 1978—to Soviet masters.

The Moscow International *Izvestia* Prize Tournament has become an excellent school for Big-Time hockey.

The European Champions Cup

An IIHL congress was held in March 1965 in the Finnish town of Tampere during the world ice hockey championship. The FRG hockey federation suggested the holding of competitions for European champions. By that time the football tournament was already widely popular and European Champions Cups were vied for in other sports as well.

The suggestion was adopted and in the 1965/66 winter season, the championship competition between the leading teams of the Old Continent began. Clubs from 13 countries consented to play in the tournament, however, the champions of the USSR, Sweden, GDR did not take part.

Then the number of contenders for the honoured prize increased. Players from the GDR took part in the next tournament and a year later the champions of Sweden joined in.

The first three seasons brought success to the Czechoslovak players. The sign ZKL (Brno) was engraved on the Cup three times in a row.

Then the Central Army Sports Club—the USSR champion—entered the tournament and beat in the semifinals the champions of the GDR Dynamo (Berlin)—11-1 and 13-0, making the final. The two final matches with the champions of Austria Klagenfurt Athletic Club were played in the town of Klagenfurt, the centre of the province, with the Army men

winning two confident victories—9-1 and 14-3. The European Champions Cup went to a new address.

In the next European tournament our country was represented by the two clubs—champions of the USSR Moscow Spartak and the Cup winner—the Central Army Sports Club.

On their way to the final, Spartak and the Army Club outplayed their opponents from Czechoslovakia and Sweden and met in the final, with the Army Club once again capturing the Cup.

A year later the Army men again made the final and met there Czechoslovak Dukla from the town of Jiglava.

As usual, the final consisted of two games. The first was played in Moscow with the Central Army Sports Club winning 7-0 and three days later tied with Dukla 3-3 at its home.

The highest club award of European hockey went to the Central Army Sports Club for the third time. They repeated the hat trick of the ZKL Club (Brno). A year later, in December 1972, the USSR champions set a new record winning the Cup for the fourth time in a row.

Brynäs and the Central Army Sports Club met in the final. In the first game in Czechoslovakia the Army men won a resounding victory over the Czechoslovak team—8-2 and on December 5, after beating Brynäs once again 8-3, the Army Club players received the most coveted prize of European ice hockey for the fourth time.

A year later, Brynäs and the Central Army Sports Club met again in the finals of the European Champions Cup and once again the Soviet players were indisputed leaders. Having won in Sweden 6-2, the Army players nine months later, on August 24, 1974, thrashed Swedes at home 12-2. Hockey fans remembered the match because the Army Club showed for the first time a trio at the tournament of such a calibre: Vladimir Vikulov, Victor Zhlukto and Boris Alexandrov. Very soon the trio won a firm foothold on the national team, while the team's two debutants—Alexandrov and Zhlukto two years later became Olympic champions.

A year later, in August 1975, the first match of the finals of the European Cup was held in the Czechoslovak town of Pardubice where the local Tesla met the Cup holders—Soviet Army Sports Club. The outcome of the match turned out to be quite unexpected for many hockey specialists. Tesla won 3-2. Its leading masters played exceptionally well, while one of its trios—Vladimir Martinec, Jiří Novak and Bohuslav Stastny—played for the Czechoslovak national team.

The Soviet champions beat Tesla in the return match which was played in Moscow on September 2. By the results of the two matches, victory went to Muscovites winning the European Champions Cup for the sixth time.

In 1976, the Czechoslovak Poldi from the town of Kladno won the Cup.

The Coaches of the World Champions

Young players know how great is the coach's role in sport, because he is the man who organises and conducts study and training sessions and gives instructions to players during the game.

His role is decisive both in the work with beginners and in the leading Soviet teams, the national team included.

Seven of our hockey coaches led the Soviet national team at one time or another to the top platform on the pedestal of honour. The seven Merited Coaches of the USSR—Arkady Chernyshev, Anatoly Tarasov, Vladimir Yegorov, Vsevolod Bobrov, Boris Kulagin and their young colleagues, recent pupils of these venerable teachers—Konstantin Loktev and Vladimir Yurzinov.

Arkady Chernyshev

Born in 1914, he is the Merited Master of Sport, Merited Coach of the USSR. He coached the Moscow Dynamo, the first country's ice hockey champion.

He worked with the country's national team (with intervals) from 1948 to 1972, although we had no national team before that and in its first matches it played as a Moscow selected team.

Eleven times (1954, 1956, 1963-1971), Soviet players coached by Chernyshev became world champions and four times (1956, 1964, 1968 and 1972)—Olympic champions.

Chernyshev was an excellent athlete himself—he played football for Dynamo (Moscow) and twice became the country's champion. In football he played defence and in ice hockey—forward. He showed his mettle both in winter, when he played bandy, and in summer—on football field. He even managed to play hockey—a new sport for our country—for three seasons. He won great renown and did much for Soviet sport when he became coach.

The Dynamo team headed by Chernyshev had its own, inimitable style of play, the development of attack and the organisation of defence which placed it apart from all its rivals.

Chernyshev worked with the club for more than a quarter of a century. During these years the team's composition changed more than once, with veterans leaving and greenhorns coming into the play. Passing the baton of tradition from the old to the new players, the team remained true to itself—because the ever-young coach worked with it.

Most brilliant victories of Soviet hockey are linked with the name of Arkady Chernyshev as well as the development of many gifted masters who played for the national squad and became world and Olympic champions. The Moscow Dynamo is the club of Valentin Kuzin, Alexander Uvarov, Yuri Krylov, Vitaly Davydov, Vladimir Yurzinov, Valery Vasilyev and, finally, Alexander Maltsev, one of the brilliant stars of modern



A. Chernyshev

hockey. All of these famous grandmasters were Arkady Chernyshev's charges.

Anatoly Tarasov

The Soviet national team with which Tarasov worked, became world champions nine times (1963-1971) and thrice won the Olympic gold (1964, 1968, 1972).

Anatoly Tarasov was born in 1918. He was the first hockey player to be awarded the title of Merited Master of Sports. Merited Coach of the USSR, he for many years coached the Central Army Sports Club. He is also a Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences.

Tarasov played football and hockey. In hockey he played in the trio together with Vsevolod Bobrov and Yevgeny Babich.

Twenty years ago, when summing up the results of the hockey season, the *Sovetsky Sport* noted the appearance of a

group of interesting and talented coaches, naming Anatoly Tarasov the first.

Ever since he has always tried to be the first, always searching for a new approach, for something new, debating with his opponents and most of all with himself. He negated things revered only yesterday. No dogmas. His hockey lived, changed, acquiring new content.

For him there would never be a day when he would say: "Halt, fleeting moment, thou art beautiful!" Because everything of the most interesting and exciting is still lay ahead. Ice hockey is everything for Tarasov. One trait, one episode is characteristic of him. The coach and the player went mushrooming. The player bent to pick a mushroom and all of a sudden heard behind him:

"Just a sec. You can't cut your mushrooms like that. You must bend in a different way, lower one knee, as if catching a puck..."

The team coached by Anatoly Tarasov is the country's 19-times champion, six-times winner of the European Champions Cup, the winner of the World Cup. In other words, the strongest club in the world. Tarasov reared dozens of top-notch players in the Central Army Sports Club, rising to the highest pedestal of honour.

We have mentioned in this book the names of many leading players over the generations, the great majority of whom were Army men, comrades and pupils of the famous coach. Olympic champions—Veniamin Alexandrov, Alexander Almetov, Yevgeny Babich, Yuri Blinov, Vsevolod Bobrov, Vladimir Vikulov, Leonid Volkov, Oleg Zaitsev, Eduard Ivanov, Anatoly Ionov, Victor Kuzkin, Konstantin Loktev, Boris Mikhailov,



A. Tarasov

Yevgeny Mishakov, Yuri Moiseyev, Vladimir Petrov, Nikolai Puchkov, Alexander Ragulin, Igor Romishevsky, Nikolai Sologubov, Vladislav Tretyak, Valery Kharlamov, Gennady Tsygankov and other brilliant ice hockey aces learned the intricacies of the game in the Army Club led for many years by Anatoly Tarasov.

The Central Army Sports Club's charges are known far beyond the borders of the Soviet Union becoming proficient players and excellent coaches. Many of them coached or are coaching a number of leading teams today. Yuri Baulin coached Spartak for several seasons, Nikolai Puchkov headed the Leningrad Army Club, Boris Kulagin—the Moscow Krylya Sovetov team.

The prizes and medals won by the Army men are not just a gift of fortune,

but an award for enthusiasm, for a constant creative work. For their love of hockey.

A “roving” defenceman, a system of play “five in attack, and five in defence”, a flow method of training, playing with halfbacks, an active defence with four and not with five players as before—all these elements were found and tested in Tarasov's creative laboratory.

Vladimir Yegorov

The Soviet national team coached by Vladimir Yegorov from 1954 to 1960, became twice (1954 and 1956) world and once (1956) Olympic champions.

Born in 1912, Yegorov is the Merited Master of Sports of the USSR. For many years he coached Krylya Sovetov and of late worked in the Polish People's Republic training the Naprzód club in the town of Janów.

Yegorov was a well-known football player—halfback in the Moscow Krylya Sovetov team.

He became enthusiastic about ice hockey and played right wing. In Krylya Sovetov became a playing coach and won a reputation of being one of the major ice hockey specialists. When the Moscow selected team was formed in 1948 for the matches with well-known guests from Czechoslovakia LTC-Praha, he was named one of its coaches.

Working in an interesting and creative way, he coached Krylya Sovetov to be champions. During the four seasons the team was in the second place and in 1951 won the USSR Cup.

For seven years at a row, Krylya Sovetov was the prize-winner at the national championships and it was these years that



The USSR Olympic team

saw the brilliant masters in our hockey and on the international arena—Yegorov's pupils—defenceman Alfred Kuchevsky, the famous trio of forwards Nikolai Khlystov, Alexei Guryshv and Mikhail Bychkov. Another outstanding master—many-times world and Olympic champion—defenceman Eduard Ivanov, began his sporting career under Yegorov's wing.

His pupils learned from him industriousness and a principled approach toward everything, love for sport and hockey, demand of oneself, the urge not to be satisfied with today's results and to work for a lofty goal.

Vsevolod Bobrov

The Soviet national team coached by Vsevolod Bobrov won two world championships—in Moscow (1973) and in Helsinki (1974).

Bobrov was an excellent hockey player and just as brilliant a footballer. He knew well and could do everything in these popular games. His daring, breathtaking raids towards the opponent's goal, his bull's-eye shots and diversified, inimitable feints are still fresh in the memory of many sports fans. Bobrov was the first Soviet player to become the IIHL's laureate: at the first World Championship in 1954, in which the Soviet team took part, he received the prize awarded to the best forward of the tournament.

Former captain of the national team (football and ice hockey) he was also quite successful as a coach.

Vsevolod coached Moscow Spartak, which won the country's championship in 1967. Five Spartak men played for the Soviet national squad which became world champions in Vienna. Bobrov was given the title of the Merited Coach of the USSR for training V. Zinger, V. Starshi-

nov, B. Mayorov, A. Yakushev and V. Yaroslavtsev.

After leaving the Spartak team, Bobrov worked as a football coach for the Central Army Sports Club and later returned to hockey. On the eve of the Prague World Championship, he was placed at the head of the country's national team.

Under his coaching Soviet players first met the Canadian professional players. The Soviet squad passed this difficult test with flying colours.

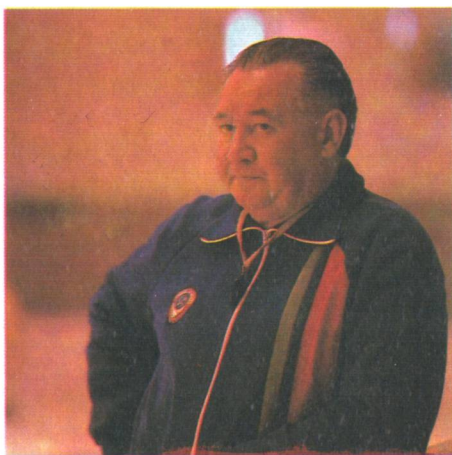
Boris Kulagin

Kulagin coached the country's national team first in 1974. Under his leadership Soviet masters successfully played against the strongest WHA professionals, won the 1975 world championship in Munich and Düsseldorf and, finally, won at the 12th Olympic Games in Innsbruck (February 1976).

Kulagin began his sporting career in Yuni Dynamovets, played for the Moscow Spartak, the Air Force team, Chelyabinsk Tractor, the Central Army Sports Club, then studied in Leningrad, became a coach, worked in Orenburg (where the first cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin trained under him), in Kuibyshev and beginning with 1962 and up to 1970—coached the Central Army Sports Club team.

Boris Kulagin worked with well-known Army players—V. Lutchenko, V. Kharlamov, V. Vikulov, V. Tretyak and others. For eight years he was the second coach of the national team.

Then Boris was placed at the head of the Krylya Sovetov team which made quite good progress under his coaching. Krylya rose to the fourth rung on the tournament ladder, then to the third and a



B. Kulagin

year later became champions. But what is more important the team began to delegate its players to the national team. A young forward, Vyacheslav Anisin, made his debut at the Prague World Championship. Then other Krylya players including Anisin's partners in the trio—Alexander Bodunov and Yuri Lebedev—defencemen Yuri Shatalov, Victor Kuznetsov, Yuri Tyurin, Sergei Babinov, forwards Vladimir Repnev, Sergei Kapustin and goaltender Alexander Sidelnikov.

Kulagin is a thoughtful coach, who is always seeking new ways and methods. He conducts his training in an interesting way, giving his charges new exercises and directs matches with a great deal of skill and knowledge.

Konstantin Loktev

Konstantin is a coach of the new generation who learned at one time or another from Chernyshev, Tarasov, Bobrov and Kulagin.

In 1974 he became the senior coach of the Central Army Sports Club and one of the coaches of the national team. In 1975, the Central Army Sports Club under his coaching became the champions of the USSR. Loktev was one of the national squad's coaches who became world champion in 1975 and Olympic champion in 1976.

He was one of the best forwards in the history of our sport. Konstantin played in the famous trio Loktev-Almetov-Alexandrov, which was rightly considered the best in the world amateur hockey. Many-times world and an Olympic champion, he received the best forward prize at the 1966 tournament in Ljubljana. The young Army players Victor Zhluktov and Boris Alexandrov alongside the veterans of the Army Club played in the national team in Innsbruck at the 12th Winter Olympic Games. Their mastery was perfected under Loktev's coaching.

Vladimir Yurzinov

The youngest coach of the national team, Yurzinov was born in 1940. He played for Moscow Dynamo as a forward and was world and Olympic champion. Vladimir trained the Finnish national team and in the 1974/1975 season was the coach of the national team and of the Moscow Dynamo which in the spring of 1976 won bronze and the USSR Cup.

Yurzinov was one of the coaches of the Soviet squad which won the 12th Olympic Games and the World Championships of 1975, 1978, 1979.

Vladimir is a journalist and often writes about ice hockey. According to specialists, he is one of the most interesting and far-sighted coaches.

Victor Tikhonov

The coach about whom much more is written of late than about his colleagues taken together.

The destiny was not lenient on Tikhonov. He ascended towards successes and glory gradually, coaching with passion and abandon and working 18 hours a day.

At the end of the 40s-the beginning of the 50s, he played in the Air Force and Dynamo teams. He was a fair defenceman and became champion of the USSR. For several years he worked as the second coach of the Moscow Dynamo team. The work side by side with Chernyshev has given Victor much. But he wanted to try his abilities training independently and went to Riga. The Riga Dynamo was a mediocre team playing in the second group of Class "A". When Tikhonov took the club over, it began to change before everyone's eyes. In the course of the seven years Riga players rose gradually to the first group of the Class "A", then became the strongest in this division winning the right to play in the higher league of Class "A". Having become one of the select clubs, the team became a noticeable phenomenon in Soviet sport.

After the two failures of the Soviet team in the 1976 and 1977 World Championships, Victor Tikhonov was entrusted to head the country's national squad and the strongest Soviet Central Army Club.

Two years passed and everyone began to ... sympathise with Tikhonov. Why? You think he was beset by failures? No, the reason was quite different. The loud, striking and continuing victories of the teams coached by Tikhonov—the Central



V. Yurzinov

Army Club invariably won all the competitions—national championship, the USSR Cup and all the tournaments it took part in. The Soviet national team won the 1978 World Championship in Prague and then the prizes founded by the editorials of the newspapers *Rude Pravo* (Prague) and *Izvestia* (Moscow), then the Challenge Cup—a series of matches with the NHL and WHA teams, which included all the strongest players of the North America, with all the matches being held in the most convenient time for the Canadian and American professionals and on their home rinks. And, finally, the national team of the USSR, coached by Victor Tikhonov, won the 1979 World Championship in Moscow with an



V. Tikhonov

overpowering superiority, winning in it all the matches without losing a single point.

All there was to win have been won. Now Tikhonov is faced with the most complicated task of winning invariably in the future matches. Any defeat now will be a step backward. However, in sport it is hardly possible to do without defeats. That's why Victor's friends sympathise with him—he shouldn't have been in such a hurry and leave at least a single goal "for tomorrow".

As before, the coach works 18 hours a day. He is pondering the tactics of the game, planning training sessions, thinking about the tomorrow's line-up of the national and the Central Army Sports Club teams.

Incidentally, why not try and win new matches in future?

How to Train

In learning to play one has to train a lot. This, of course, should be done under the supervision of an experienced coach. But boys can conduct training sessions themselves. A series of simple gymnastic exercises without sticks, standing or running: rotating hands forwards and backwards, bending trunk, squatting on both legs, a deep lunge forward on one foot while bending your body forward, turning your trunk to the right and left, spreading your arms quickly to the sides and bringing them together again.

Exercises with the stick: rotate stick holding it with one hand in the middle or at the end, bring it behind your back and again in the initial position, hold it in both hands in a wide grip in front of you. Various swings while holding the stick are also very useful.

Gradually make these exercises more complicated: alternate the direction of skating, accelerating or skating backwards.

The next part of the session—6-7 starts or 20-25 m. accelerations. It is recommended to skate backwards for a while between accelerations.

Then do a series of already-known technical elements with the puck: dribbling, passing, shooting.

After that get down to learning some new technical elements, for instance, shooting the puck from the right side. First, send the puck against the boards, while standing. Then one of the boys passes the puck to his partner while skating.

One of the most interesting part of training is the conducting of group exercises: two vs two, or two vs two with a neutral player helping those in possession of the puck, or playing into two goals.

While doing these exercises, set yourself a task: learn to pass the puck in one go, or try to suddenly shake off your opponent and open yourself for a pass, or learn to take the puck cleanly away and so on.

End your training session by skating while alternating the direction of movement.

Include in your training various relays exercises developing the accuracy of execution of this or that element—in a word, everything that makes training sessions more interesting.

Time must be given to learning new elements and repeating those already mastered. Each element, each tactical combination demands multiple repetitions, repetition in various play situations.

Let's take, for example, a shot from the left. The simplest thing is to throw the puck while skating at a slow speed. Begin with this. Then gradually increase your speed of skating. At the beginning the puck is on the right side of the player, then in front of him and brought to the left side. This element will be more difficult to execute, if the player accelerates or receives the puck from his partner. It can be made even more difficult: dribble the puck past several poles and by-pass an opponent.

When learning a movement, keep to the principle of going from the "known to

unknown", then you are sure to make progress.

When a young player gets down to learning how to dribble the puck, he begins executing this element at a slow speed. Pushing the puck to the right, he quickly brings the blade over the puck to the right and, stopping it, pushes it to the left. Then all the movements are repeated.

While doing this, the player must see to it that he pushes the puck softly, that the puck does not leave the blade. When the player fails to make his movements automatic, he concentrates all his attention on the blade and the puck, afraid of doing something wrong and, therefore, loses sight of his partner. Control the puck, try to look forward, so as to see what is happening on the ice. Keep your head up so as to have a good field of vision.

When learning to dribble the puck, send it to the right-left and somewhat forward so that it now leaves you, now is brought back to your feet. The left hand (if the right one grips the handle) should freely travel along the handle.

Having mastered this element while skating slowly, gradually accelerate speed.

When the player learns to dribble the puck confidently, he may get down to learning accelerations, making sudden stops, dribble the puck past the poles, dribble the puck in play situations, by-passing partners, etc.

This sequence will help the player quickly to master dribbling.

If some movement is hard for you to master, especially at the beginning, you must keep trying and find the reason which prevents you from mastering it. More often than not, the player executes

some movement incorrectly or executes it in haste and takes up a wrong position.

When the mistake is found, it is easy to correct it. At times a young player tries to increase his speed of skating, but fails to do so. After the first failures he gets upset: "I have no natural speed, that's why I'll never be a fast skater...", he says dejectedly. But he's wrong.

Mastery comes with hard work: you're not born a master, but become one. The reason for insufficient speed very often lies in the fact that the player places his skates on the ice incorrectly and fails to push off strongly. Then there's another mistake: the young player cannot make an energetic push-off, because he doesn't fix his heel. Sometimes the cause lies in the fact that the player holds his body incorrectly.

Merited Coach of the USSR A. Tarasov recalled in his book *Hockey and Children* how he once watched a group of youngsters work on the elements of dribbling, passing and taking the puck away from an opponent at a school rink. Every day for hours on end they worked hard mastering the intricacies of the game. Despite their great desire and persistence, nothing came of it.

Their mistakes were glaring, but the boys never gave them a thought. For instance, while dribbling, some of them kept their body tense, their head low and, as a result, lost their bearing.

When something doesn't come off properly, one wants to put it off till later, tomorrow. This is what most of the boys do. That's all right, they think, I'll try it again tomorrow with fresh strength. But popular wisdom says: "Never put off for tomorrow what you can do today." One must work persistently to achieve one's objective.

You must train two to three times a week, then add another day. Allow one or two days rest between the training sessions. At first the sessions must be no more than one hour in length.

When youngsters can stand up to the physical strain, the duration of sessions can be increased. It depends on the character of the training and its intensity. If the exercises include speed skating while dribbling the puck or without it, the duration of the session may be shortened. If you work on some technical elements which do not demand a great physical load, the time of the session may be increased. How the youngsters feel must also be taken into account.

After a training session or a competition give a helping hand with house chores or do your homework: switching to other work will help you restore your strength quicker.

To train well and take part in competitions, you must observe a strict regime: get to bed early, have your meals and training sessions at regular hours. Do not linger in bed but get up and do your morning jerks.

Begin with walking. Conditions permitting, run for 150-200 metres. Then get down to push-ups, head rotations, hand swings, various body turns and bends and crouchings.

Do some of the exercises with the stick.

Besides general physical exercises include into your plan some special ones which will help you to correct this or that physical deficiency (for instance, developing different groups of muscles).

For a goaltender, for example, it will be useful to do some exercises strengthening the fingers. We recommend for this purpose compressing a tennis ball, doing

various bends and coming down to rest on your fingers and other exercises.

Players, whose feet get tired quickly should include exercises strengthening hip and heel muscles. For instance, various crouching on one or two feet.

Avoid exercises which restrain breathing or demand great muscle strain in the morning. If you do your exercises in the fresh air, round them out with a ball game or running. The duration of morning exercises is 15-20 minutes. After that take a shower or rub down with cold water.

Have a meal three or four hours before your training session. Do not drink too much water, even if you want to. After the session it is not recommended to drink much liquid, it places a great load on your cardio-vascular system. Take a shower after a competition or a training session, rinse your mouth, do not drink water for an hour or two, especially cold water. When your first thirst subsides somewhat, drink a glass of hot tea.

Young players should not be intimidated either by snow, rain or heat. The change in weather can only change the character of the training session. For instance, when training during a snowfall, the best exercise is clearing the rink from the snow. In winter always have shovels ready at the rink, better made from plywood (blade width—70-80 cm., height—40-50 cm.). When it is snowing hard and there's no reason to clear the rink from snow, simply skate around the rink, work on the elements of body checking, and so on.

When the weather is cold, warm-up energetically: skate around the rink and then do some gymnastic exercises. So as not to cool off during training, do not stop or sit down on a bench for too long. If

your hands get cold even in warm mittens, you can warm them up with such exercises as rotating your wrists, clapping hands in front of you, over your head, behind back, swinging hands, compressing them quickly and loosening them.

It is more difficult to keep your feet warm. Always keep your feet clean and dry.

If you feel that you are getting cold, go back to the locker room, take off your boots and warm the soles of your feet with your hands or run around the room in your socks. After that you may return to the rink, your feet will keep warm now.

If a player gets tired quickly during training and if he doesn't want to train any longer, he must go and see the doctor. This state may be a result of overtraining. The player must stop training and for a time diminish the load.

Usually the feeling of overtraining disappears after 5-7 days. After that the player may start regular training sessions once again.

Physically fit players regularly train all the year round and observing the sports regime should never become overtrained.

Every player must know measures to be taken against bruises. Usually they occur during rough play on the part of the opponent or when a player is not prepared for an intensive physical load or sharp movements.

Get down to learning body-checking and accelerations at maximum speed only

after a good warm-up. Any competition must be preceded by an energetic warm-up.

The undisciplined behaviour of players may also be the cause of bruises. For instance, it is very dangerous for the goalie when several shots are made at the goal simultaneously during training. Concentrating his attention on one player, taking a shot at the goal, the goalkeeper fails to react in time to another shot. Players must know that only one shot can be made at the goal at a time.

Incorrect positioning of players undertaking a certain exercise may also result in bruises. For instance, stationing yourself accidentally behind the back of the player who is about to receive a pass, you may become a target for a fast-flying puck. Therefore, think when stationing players on the ice during a training session.

Uneven ice with pits and holes, dirty and thawing ice, dull skate blades (when the player cannot stop sharply or make sharp turns), also may be a cause of an accident.

Immediate medical aid must be given to the player who receives a serious bruise, has a strained muscle, a bone fracture, etc. Apply a cold compress or a tight bandage to a bruised place before the doctor arrives and in case of a bone fracture—make a splint bandage. Every young player must know how to give first aid.

Four Plans of the Study-Training Sessions (Ice Hockey Begins in the Summer)

Speed, strength, stamina, agility—all these qualities are being formed and instilled not only in winter during matches and training on the ice, but also in the summer and in the autumn, when players get ready for the coming season.

Most young players like to play football, volleyball, go in for running, swimming, bicycling, hiking, or go mushrooming and berry-gathering. This is all interesting and beneficial. However, young players must not forget about hockey.

Perhaps not all the boys know how to train, or their coaches—senior school or institute students, young workers or PT teachers—do not give sufficient thought as to how training can be organised in the best way. That is why we give examples of training plans. These may serve as a supplement to emphasise the role and importance of training sessions.

Plan One

Summer training. Such sessions can be held during summer vacations, when youngsters go to the Young Pioneer camps.

Find a low hill or a hillock, or a slope of a ravine, a steep bank of the river, lake or a pond. In a word, anything that will suit you, that happens to be near your Pioneer camp, or village...

Preparatory Section

1. 300 m running. While running try to do some hockey elements. Imagine that you have a stick in your hands and imitate a shot at the goal, by-passing, dribbling.

2. Running in a file. One crouches, next vaults over him and also crouches, the third vaults over the first, second and crouches, the fourth vaults over them all and so on, then the first vaults over his mates. While running “handle the stick”, imitating passes, shots at the goal, by-passing.

3. Take a hockey stand—bend legs, crouch slightly and begin walking in this stance.

4. Walking with goose steps.

5. Three accelerations in $\frac{3}{4}$ of your strength for 20-30 m.

6. Exercises with stuffed balls (medicine balls): carry the ball between your legs, behind your back, around your neck, etc.

7. Jumping in hockey stance.

Main Part

1. Running uphill and downhill while imitating skating. Distance 50-60 m. (2-3 times). The hill gradient must not exceed 40° .

2. 20-metre walking in a crouch (2-3 times).

3. "Cock fight" while moving uphill. The "fight" (pushing each other) is conducted (with one or several partners) on one leg with your arm pinned against your body. Repeat 2-3 times alternating legs on which you jump.

4. Two accelerations, full speed (20-30 metres).

5. Walking in pairs on your hands: one player holds another by his feet, then they change places. The player does push-ups first on one hand, then on the other—twice. This exercise can be made more difficult, if you move uphill.

6. Climbing the hill with your partner on your back.

7. Two accelerations, full force (20-30 m.). Return back, running slowly backwards.

8. Running uphill, holding your partner in your arms—twice.

9. "Storming the hill". One team tries to break to the top of the hill, while the defending team prevents them from doing it. We emphasise—here it is not the struggle in the direct sense of the word, not the desire to push your opponent away, but rather the desire to deceive, to outwit him, to run away from him using the elements of feints and by-passing.

10. Passing a stuffed ball in pairs. Do this exercise while running at maximum speed with various turns, jumps, imitations of feints, etc.

11. Jumping on one leg, work uphill—twice on each leg.

12. 300 m running.

Concluding Part

500 m running.

The analysis of the training. Examining errors. If there's no hill, nor hillock, nor

ravine, nor a high bank nearby, conduct training session in a glade, at a sports ground, or in the field. If you have no stuffed balls, you can use small bags filled with sand.

Plan Two

Now we offer young players on approximate plan of a training session which may be conducted in autumn, when school begins and there's no time to go to the countryside. The session can be conducted in a school yard, in a park, a public garden, or in case of a bad weather—in a gym. There's very little required for this: your desire and ... a bench, not very high and without a back.

Preparatory Part

1. Warming-up.

2. 300 m running (with 180-360° turns and light jumps).

3. The player jumps over one partner, crawls under another, again jumps over the third and so on.

4. Forward lunges while walking first with the right and then with your left foot.

5. Moving forward, make a deep crouch, jump up, then crouch again and jump up.

6. Imitate skating.

7. Push-ups—up to 15 times.

8. Wrestling each other until first victory.

Main Part

1. Jumping over a low bench on one foot, first on your right and then on the left foot. The number of jumps depends on the bench's height.

2. Jumping over the bench with a simultaneous turn by 180° or 360°.

3. Holding your partner on your back, climb the bench and get off on the other side. Each partner does the exercise 3 times.

4. Three 20-metre accelerations (with feints and 180° and 360° turns).

5. Climb onto the bench holding your partner on your shoulders and lower on the other side of the bench. Three times.

6. 40 m. accelerations (conditions as before).

7. Your partner holds you by your legs, while you walk towards the bench on your hands (2 m), get up onto the bench and get off on the other side of it.

8. Accelerations. One 40 m. spurt.

9. Climb onto the bench and get off on the other side holding your partner in your hands.

10. Somersaults on the bench grasping its sides with your hands.

11. More accelerations. 50 m. spurts.

12. 200 m. light running.

Concluding Part

300 m. running.

Analysing mistakes and the tasks for future sessions. Duration—1,5 hour.

Plan Three

The main aim of the previous session was training in speed and building up strength. Now we suggest you work on technique.

Preparatory Part

1. Warming-up with sticks—10-15 min. 500 m. running. Stretching exercises (lunges, etc.), exercises to strengthen your abdominal muscles: sit down on the floor, raise your legs and make criss-cross movements.

2. Bench exercises. Jumping over the bench while imitating skating. Begin jumping with alternate feet: first on the left, on the right, then on both. Do it with various turns.

3. Five 50 m. lunges.

Main Part

1. Dribbling ball by various methods. Best of all a tennis ball or a child's rubber ball.

2. Shooting the ball into goal, aiming at its right or left corners.

3. Relays:

a) dribbling the ball using feints;

b) with the partner on your back. Once again imitating feints with your body, shoulder, head.

4. Ball dribbling while jumping on one foot.

5. Speed dribbling without feints.

6. Playing hockey. Five vs five, three vs three. Duration 20 min.

Concluding Part

300 m. running with sticks.

Analysing mistakes.

Plan Four

Winter training on ice. Probably, many of you are apt to think that this lesson is the most interesting. And why not? Ice

rink, skates, pucks and goals! In a word, hockey. But don't be in a hurry. Naturally, this training session is exciting. However, if you were lazy during summer and autumn, you won't find it easy on the rink today.

Preparatory Part

1. Warming-up without skates — crouching, running on the spot, lunges, stretching exercises, jumps, trunk bending.

2. Clearing the rink from snow and watering it.

3. Skating clockwise in file. While skating across the neutral zone, do gymnastic exercises: drop now to one knee, now to another, to your stomach and then get up quickly.

Main Part

1. Skating in a circle holding stick in both hands, legs bent, head lifted—5-7 circles.

2. Skating backwards (watch your footwork)—three circles.

3. Acceleration while changing direction of movement (two-three steps towards the boards, two-three steps from the boards)—three circles.

4. Skating while making 360° turns.

5. Jumping over stick held by the coach—15-20 jumps.

6. Jumping exercises (from right to left, on both feet)—three circles.

7. Abrupt stops. The player carries his partner who breaks with the stick—60 metres twice.

8. Skating along a big and small figure "eight". The small one—around the two face-off circles in one zone. The big one—around the two face-off circles in

one zone right up to the blue line of another zone.

9. Passing puck in pairs while changing places. The player passes puck to his partner to the right and follows it to take the partner's place. While the partner, to whom the puck was addressed, skates to the left. Then passing the puck, again moves to the left. The puck moves diagonally. This exercise helps to improve the art of passing and receiving puck on the go.

10. Training in file "one against another". After by-passing, players change roles: the defending player attacks and vice versa. In these encounters partners constantly change places: player A tackles not only player B but also C, D, E and, so on.

11. Three vs two. The attack is mounted along the red line. Players develop their technical skill and tactical mastery. If the attack ends in a goal, defence-men do several somersaults as a "penalty". If the goal is saved and defence-men seized puck, forwards must spurt to the red or blue line, again as a "penalty".

12. Playing "five vs five"—20 minutes. You understand that here it is not goals that count, but learning and perfecting this or that assignment and mastering technical skill.

Concluding Part

Skating in a circle. Two 20-m. accelerations.

Analysing mistakes.

These are exemplary plans of training. At your discretion you may increase or, on the contrary, decrease the number of exercises, or introduce new assignments.

If you have no coach or he is busy on that particular day, try and conduct the

training session yourself. Let the captain of the team be a stand-in coach.

Sometimes young players complain—they get sick of training. It would be much better if the coach let them play...

They complain, although they know only too well how important training sessions are.

Many coaches and teachers constantly seek new and interesting forms of training. E. Geller, Senior Lecturer at the Byelorussian Institute of Physical Culture, suggested a series of interesting games which may help you and your coaches to make training sessions more exciting and happy.

Relay with puck dribbling. Players line up behind the start line in a column of one. 10 flags on stands are placed against each team at intervals of 3-4 metres. The first man in a column has a stick and a puck. At a signal the first player begins skating, dribbling the puck in and out the flags. They cannot either be passed by or knocked down. If the flag is knocked down, the player must return, replace the flag and continue the relay. Soon as the player reaches the last flag, he turns back and dribbles the puck in the same way, passes the stick to next in line and the relay continues. The team which finishes first wins.

Shooting at a target. The goal becomes a target. The goal mouth is covered with boards with slits at the bottom. The central slit is 40 cm. in diameter and those in the corners—30 cm. each. From a spot 10 m. from the goal players make a shot at the goal aiming at one of the slits. A player gets one point if he hits the central slit and two points for scoring side slits. The team which collects the greatest number of points wins.

Sven Tumba (Johansson) (Sweden), shares his secrets.

To perfect accuracy, place various targets on the ice and shoot at them from various positions. Targets must be of different heights. It is useful to conduct competitions between players and see who scores the greatest number of hits. Another good exercise is shooting at a square target—wooden 25 × 25 cm. block weighing approximately 5 kg. The task is to move the block over the greatest distance with the least number of shots. The puck must be powerfully shot and at the same time accurately. I would recommend shooting first from a 2-3-metre distance. When the accuracy and the force of shots improves, increase the distance, but no sooner than the percentage of shots from 2-3-metres is 100 per cent.

Leads can be suspended from the goal's crossbar on rubber thongs dividing the goalmouth vertically and shots made at definite parts of the goal. Sometimes the exercise can be made more complicated by indicating spots of the goal most difficult for the goalie and shooting at them from various positions.

A good player must strive to shoot accurately and powerfully. This is not easy, because when you shoot powerfully, you somewhat lose accuracy. When you see that your shots became more and more accurate, start shooting while skating and try to do it rhythmically...

There are situations in hockey when your shots miss the goal although, seemingly, you do everything correctly. You find yourself alone with the goalie and miss. In such cases it is very easy to lose confidence in oneself. It is very important that other players realise that a player is not always lucky and that in some matches he may be plagued by misfortune.

You have to have someone to point out to you why you missed this or that shot, whether you made the shot correctly or not and so on. In other words, someone must keep a card which shows why you have missed the opportunities to score. You can analyse your mistakes by it and have a clear picture on how to improve the technique of your shots.

I'll tell you how I learned to shoot at the goal. I used to play with the puck for a long time, doing various exercises to develop equilibrium, but, mainly, endlessly trained shooting at the goal. I shot and shot developing strength and accuracy. I knew that the goaltender would be unable to catch the puck if the shot is powerful and sharp. Therefore, I began training in a pair with a goalie from the very first years of playing hockey. I took shots at the goal and the goalie tried to catch every puck.

I made so many shots that at the end we were so tired that I couldn't make a single shot more. Finally, it brought results. My partner became a proficient goalie and my shots improved considerably. The thing is that we trained until we were sure that we were doing everything correctly. We did not stop training until we mastered some element completely. True, I'm still not satisfied with myself.

I mastered the art of shooting, learning the technique of the Canadians and Americans who played in Sweden. I watched how they shot at the goal, how they lifted the stick, at what spot the stick hit the puck and so on. Learning these elements, I gradually learned to do them myself. When I went to Canada, I saw how the Canadians execute a slap shot. I studied the technique of one of the best players at close quarters, watching how he gripped the stick, how his muscles worked and in what position his body and feet were. Then I began training myself and did not stop until I learned to shoot just as accurately as the Canadians.

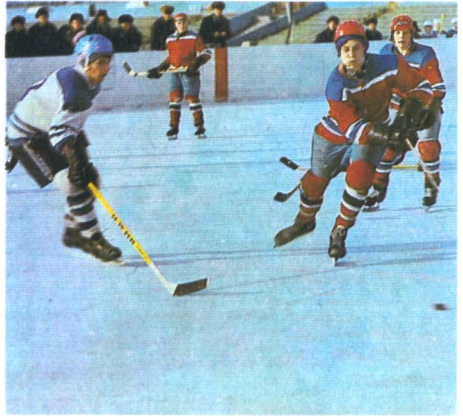
If really persistent, anyone can learn to shoot powerfully and accurately and this is very important to outwit the goalie. Goalies are always improving their game so you have constantly to improve your shots at the goal.

Nikolai Golomazov, coach of the Central Army Sports Club children's school, shares his secrets.

To confuse, to outwit your opponent, to deceive him with an unexpected manoeuvre, to pass the puck in time to your partner, breaking for the goal, or to make a lunge for a convenient spot and shoot at the goal yourself, to fall back in time to defend your own goal, give a timely support to your team—this is all tactics!

Sometimes the following happens in courtyard games between teams vying for the Golden Puck Prize: a player is in a good position for a shot and is begging his partner for a pass, even hitting the ice with his stick, but the puck is passed to another boy. The young player is offended and is in a huff with his comrades: why didn't they notice that he was in a such good position for a shot?! However, the offended himself is really guilty, he didn't take into consideration the tactical play of the team, the action of his team-mates. He broke too far downfield where he was blocked by opponents. How could the puck be passed to him?

What have you to do and how should you play so that your partners support your break-



way towards the enemy goal and pass the puck to you in time? How to be worthy of the puck? Yes, to be worthy of the puck and not beg for it!

First of all, shake off the opponent checking you, skate to a clear spot most convenient for the attack. How? There's no single answer to this. It all depends on the play situation developing during the game, on your inventiveness and ingenuity. Subordinate your actions to a specific moment of the play. You have a choice. Either by-pass an opponent by dashing forward, or break suddenly so that your checker skates past you. Or sharply bend to the right and, immediately, turning to the left, switch into top gear.

Remember: your opponent also has a head on his shoulders and he, too, is preparing some tactical riddle for you. That is why it is important to outpace him with your plan. Act boldly, suddenly and cheekily.

And another thing. While opening to receive a pass, skate either straight ahead, or ahead at a diagonal, but in no case back.

Never carry a grudge against your partners, even if you don't receive a pass in the most advantageous position. Never lose your desire to get it. Perhaps, not rightaway, but the third or fourth time you take up such a position, the puck will, finally, be passed to you. Never beg for it, don't shout, don't raise a hullabaloo, do not strike the stick against the ice, do not throw up your hands.

In order to receive or pass the puck in time, you must be well oriented in the play situation,

see everything happening on the ice to foresee the immediate developments of the game. I advise you, boys, during training periods to dribble the puck without looking at it. Try to control the puck not with your eyes, but with the stick. Keep your head high, watch your team-mates and everything that is happening around you. And smile, make sure you smile. It is easier to master most intricate elements with a smile.

Take any opportunity to score. Learn to make powerful and accurate shots at the goal, from any position, even from an inconvenient one. The craftier and the more unexpected the shot, the easier it is to catch the defencemen and the goalie unawares.

Oleg Belakovsky, doctor of the Soviet national team, shares his secrets.

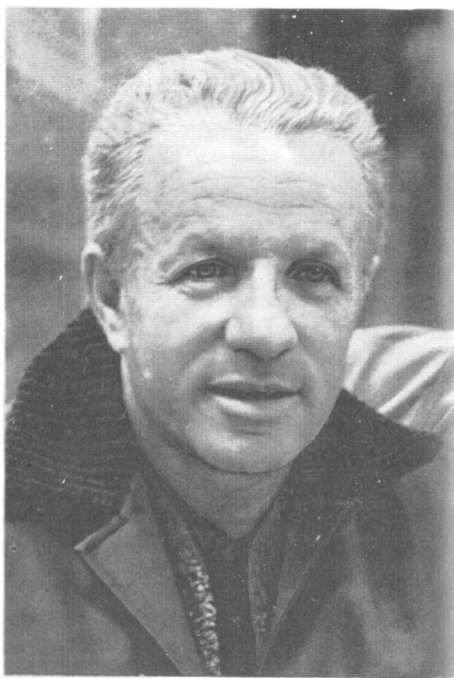
My advice is not connected either with the technique or with the tactics of the game, but it is directly related to your favourite sport.

Not only in ice hockey but also in any other game, you may trip, fall, scratch or bruise yourself. In hockey the puck may painfully strike an unprotected part of your body, leg or hand. You, boys, must be ready for any contingencies.

But, above all, I would like to warn the young players that they must see the doctor or go to the medical station immediately they get bruised. Any self-treatment is dangerous. One thing you must know, though.

Apply "cold" to a bruised spot—compressed snow, ice, a bottle with cold water. Bear in mind—only "cold" for the first 24 hours.

Now a few words about other bruises and injuries. If the wound bleeds, immediately protect it against dirt getting into it. When you



O. Belakovsky

begin a training session or a match, the coach or the captain must have bandages or a first aid kit at the ready.

If the bruise is not too big, clean it with a peroxide solution and smear it with brilliant green, or with iodine.

In the case of strained ligaments, use wet bandage as the first measure.

Your Future Opponent

The first international match of young players competing for the Golden Puck Prize was held in the spring of 1966. The strongest and the most skilful boys, proficient in hockey, who took part in the finals, were included into our national team which played in Moscow with their Czechoslovak peers.

After that, Burevestnik from the city of Dzerzhinsk, champion among the courtyard, street and school teams, paid a return visit to Czechoslovakia.

Ever since these international matches have become a regular occasion. The next courtyard champion, Signal from Novosibirsk, also went to Czechoslovakia. A tournament was held in Moscow in which young players from the GDR, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union met with the Soviet boys winning the first place.

Naturally, it is not always the Golden Puck champions who triumphed. For example, the winner in the 1968 tournament, the Chelyabinsk Meteor, won twice in the four matches in the GDR, drew once and lost one match in the city of Weisswasser.

In the spring of 1972, a selected team of the Young Pioneers came to Izhevsk from Czechoslovakia. Our guests lost one match 2-7, and won the second one 4-2, beating the Golden Puck team comprised of the players of Moscow, Udmurtia and Prokopjevsk.

The Golden Puck champions drew 2-2 with their opponents from Sweden. It was

in February 1972 when Fakel from Moscow received Skuru from Stockholm.

Children's hockey becomes more popular every year. I saw the attitude of Czechoslovak boys towards this wonderful game, how many excellent rinks and grounds they have at their disposal and how well future hockey "stars" played—boys who will come to replace the brilliant hockey strikers: Frantisek Tikal, Frantisek Pospíšil, Josef Cerny and Jiří Holík. Ever new gifted players join the leading team and the country's national team, first of all, because thousands of boys never part with their sticks and pucks and dream of becoming just as skillful masters as their elder comrades.

Today more than 20,000 young men and nearly 30,000 boys take part in various tournaments and competitions. The number of boys, who do not belong to any section but are enthusiastic about this wonderful game, is really countless.

Many thousands of the republic's schoolchildren vie for the National Team's Cup—approximately the same competition of courtyard teams as our Golden Puck Prize tournament.

Swedish boys and fans are known to be past masters of hockey. They know practically everything about their favourite game and about world's top-notch teams. We journalists were not surprised when in a carriage of the Stockholm underground two boys plied us with many questions: why Veniamin Alexandrov did not come, how old was Anatoly Firsov, who plays

better Victor Yakushev, whom they had seen before, or this new, tall one—Alexander Yakushev? We heard the voice of Swedish boys at every game. They cheered in chorus and with a lot of zest.

On one day of the 1969 World Championship the boys became masters of the famous Johanneshov ice stadium. The finals of the mass competitions of the young players were held there organised by the editorial office of one of the newspapers. It is interesting to note that these matches were refereed by the same referees who conducted world championship matches.

We liked the encounter of the 10-year-olds best of all. They tried very hard, played courageously, were gleeful when scored and disappointed when let a goal through.

The goalie of the losing team had lost heart before the game was over and began to cry. It took the coach quite some time to console the fearless guardian of the goal: second place was not bad at all.

Children's hockey in Sweden is very popular: at least 100,000 9-16-year-old players compete in various tournaments. It is a huge figure for Sweden.

All the Swedish boys who go in for hockey, try to win the right to receive a badge of the Swedish Ice Hockey League, which is given to young players for a high sporting technique. A golden badge can be won when you are 16, silver—13 and bronze—11.

Boys in Canada, the birthplace of this game, are also crazy about the game. They begin to play it much sooner—at 5-6, and sometimes even at 3-4. Ice Hockey in Canada is the national fad. It is not accidental that the country has more than 100,000 children's hockey teams. Competitions are held in age groups. Four-

five-year-olds play in the youngest group.

Pionerskaya Pravda told about one of the tournaments conducted by the Canadian junior ice hockey association.

The Polish children's hockey has three age groups: 10-11, 12-13 and 14-15. The number of children's teams grows as the popularity of this sport mounts. It is not accidental that the performance of the Polish national team, which has an excellent reserve, improves with every day.

However, it is not in every country that hockey enjoys such a popularity.

I recall how in 1967 during the days of the championship held in Vienna, the capital of Austria, I had to interview a young hockey fan. The task turned out to be not so simple.

The streets at the Vienna Stadthalle, where leading teams played in those days, looked quite unnatural to us, Soviet journalists: we practically did not see the most devoted and ardent fans—boys—at the entrance to the sports palace.

The six children whom I approached, told me that they didn't play hockey. Only my seventh interview brought results.

Peter Kein was 11. When we met, he studied in the fifth grade in the small town of Stockerau near Vienna. My young friend turned out to be a versatile athlete: a hockey and a tennis player.

Yes, in the days of the Vienna World Championship there were very few Austrian boys who were interested in the game... But the matches of the strongest teams began gradually to attract their attention. Someday, perhaps, they will play in Big-Time matches against youngsters from other countries, including those who today carry Golden Puck badges on their chest. Those who tomorrow will replace our famous masters.

The Famous Players Speak

Anatoly Firsov.

I want to be sure that the young participants of hockey competitions study well.

And another thing. A malicious boy, who is always envious and is a coward cannot be a good player. Always be kind to your mates at school, at home, in your courtyard and on the ice. You'll never succeed alone, and you'll never outplay your opponents singlehanded. Believe me, it is easier to by-pass an opponent than to give a good and clever pass and play collectively.

Boris Mayorov.

There isn't long to wait before young players will come to our teams who begin their path to Big-Time sport in courtyard teams, which vie for the Golden Puck Prize.

I know that today boys are learning to play. They are learning to shoot powerfully and accurately, learning to score. They are learning to pass a puck and by-pass opponents. That's good. That's the thing they will need. But another thing is also important: to learn to be courageous, resolute, persistent, to be a good comrade, to learn to achieve your goal.

Probably, boys saw over the TV the world championship matches, saw how difficult it is at times for the players on the rink.

I want to wish my young colleagues real courage and an urge toward victory.

Arne Strömberg, former coach of the Swedish national team.

Players of the Tre Kronors began their career in children's teams. I'm speaking about Lars Göran Nilsson and Tord Lundström. At one time these boys were the "stars" of junior tournaments. I have no doubt that the young players in all countries, where they love hockey and all the children who today vie for school team cups, have the same big future in sport. I wish that these boys find their competitions were just as exciting as world championships...

Adolphi Tambellini, a well-known forward, who played for the Canadian team at five world championships.

I wish the boys good perspectives. Good plans for the future and their realisation. Let young players share their successes equally between school and hockey. It isn't simple, I realise. But that's how it should be.

I began playing hockey a long time ago when I was nine and never parted with it ever since. I wish that the boys' love for sport does not fade with years, that hockey remains their perpetual friend.

It would be a pleasure for me to watch a match between the children's teams of Canada and the Soviet Union.

Valery Kharlamov.

Not so long ago it seemed to me that the class of play of the leading masters was an unattainable dream for me. I remember I watched the television, cheering for our players and thinking that I'll never play at the world championship. But it so happened that at the beginning of the winter of 1968-1969 I was put in the Boris Mikhailov's and Vladimir Petrov's trio—in place of the famous six-times world champion Veniamin Alexandrov and told: "You must believe in your strength and feel that you can play on an equal with those famous players. Only in this case will you be able to find yourself and to identify your possibilities. A man who doesn't believe in himself doesn't play ice hockey..."

I tried not to be shy. I tried to play the way I could and a bit better. My partners in the trio, my teammates and coaches helped me a lot. Three months later I went to the Stockholm World Championship with the national team.

I wish young players optimism, trust in themselves, in their strength and in their luck. Don't be upset and don't give up if you lose.

Victory is won by those who passionately work for success.

Frantisek Pospíšil, twice world champion, captain of the Czechoslovak national team.

I wish young players the same thing I told my son who is beginning to take hockey in earnest.

Firstly, I told him that he should never regard defeat in this or that game or at some championship as a tragedy, because hockey is a game, just a game, in which someone wins and someone loses and because defeat tests and tempers your character. The one who takes a revenge after losing will be a staunch, purposeful person in life capable of achieving the goal he set himself.

Secondly, I reminded him that in sport all the opponents are friends. Therefore, show respect towards them.

Thirdly, I told my son to be a bold and courageous lad who is not afraid of knocks and bruises. Anything can happen during the game and it is no good to be upset and feel a grudge against your opponents or referees.

Hockey, above all, helps to develop character.

Vladislav Tretyak.

My elder comrades have already given a lot of kind wishes to young players. I want to draw the attention of my colleagues from children's and youth schools to one especially important condition, in my opinion, for achieving success in sport.

I want to remind them about modesty. Today boys very often participate in competitions. It means that they often win, although others on the contrary, lose. I address my words to those who win: no matter how good you played in attack and in defence, no matter how much praise is lavished on you, never overestimate your possibilities, your mastery. Modesty is a must of your growth, of your fresh achievements in hockey.

Today you thrashed the team from your neighbour class or from the next courtyard, or from another district, or town. That's good. But don't put on airs. Perhaps, the game of your opponents didn't get on at all. Perhaps, their crack forward fell ill or got a bad mark at school and had to skip the game.

You have won, but don't forget that in the next street, or in the next town there's a team of your peers with which you haven't met yet and which is stronger than you.

The most dangerous thing in sport is when the victor thinks that there are no equals to him. Because if there are no equals, no worthy opponents, then why train at all? There's only one step from such a sentiment to defeat. Behind a crest there's always another one, more enticing, to scale, which you must always try.

There is no limit to the perfection of your mastery and I advise you to remember as often as you can what you still cannot achieve rather than about what you have already mastered.

Let the biggest and the happiest victories come to you!

Remember about modesty which is an asset to the winner.

REQUEST TO READERS

Progress Publishers would be glad to have your opinion of this book, its translation and design and any suggestions you may have for future publications.

Please send all your comments to 17, Zubovsky Boulevard, Moscow, USSR.

Oleg Spassky

ICE HOCKEY



Physical fitness and the player's athletic qualities determine to a large extent his possibilities in executing any technical or tactical action. A strong and sturdy player can send a puck with a great force and body-check effectively. If a player has a lot of endurance, he will keep up a high pace in the game during the entire match. Speed, agility and other physical qualities are also important. That is why a young player must first of all pay attention to physical fitness.

Progress Publishers